DRAMATIC TECHNIQUE IN THE MAJOR PLAYS OF GIRISH KARNAD

Submitted by

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DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the work which is being presented in the thesis titled "**Dramatic Technique in the Major Plays of Girish Karnad**" in fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and submitted to Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur, is an authentic record of my own work carried out at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences during the period from July 2010 to May 2016 under the supervision of Dr. Preeti Bhatt, Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, MNIT, Jaipur.

The results contained in this thesis have not been submitted, in part or full, to any other university or institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled "**Dramatic Technique in the Major Plays of Girish Karnad**" being submitted by **Kanupriya** to Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** is a bonafide record of research work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance. The thesis work, in my opinion, has reached the requisite standard fulfilling the requirement of **Doctor of Philosophy**.

The results contained in this thesis have not been submitted, in part or full, to any other university or institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

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ABSTRACT

The essence of life is revealed in all genres of literature, including poetry, fiction and drama. Drama being essentially a social art is perhaps the most important form of literature that leads to a comprehensive understanding of the society and the individual. Theatrical activities with elements of music, dance and acting had been popular in India as early as in the nineteenth century. The pre-independence Indian theatre was represented mostly by the Bhartiya Natya Sangh, the Indian National Theatre, and the Ebrahim Alkazi theatre unit. In the post-independence era, the National School of Drama and the Sangeet Natak Akademi were established as official theatrical bodies. Some of the leading playwrights during the nineteen fifties in India include Mahesh Dattani, Manjula Padmanabhan, Asif Curimbhoy and Gurcharan Das. The plays of Dharamvir Bharti, Badal Sircar, Mohan Rakesh, Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar and a host of other writers also became popular in the post-independence era.

Girish Karnad (1938) belonged to that group of post-independence playwrights, who employed regional folk forms to enrich the dramatic technique and highlight the Indian sensibility. Karnad upheld the traditional values on the urban stage by amalgamating folk forms with the urban sensibility. Folk conventions, like the use of masks, chorus, spectacle and the mixing of human and non-human worlds offered him the technical freedom to cater to the psychological needs of the society. Karnad's plays, although rooted in Indian mythology, convey a strong western philosophical sensibility. In Karnad's works, the existentialist crisis of a modern man is conveyed through strong individuals who are locked in intense psychological and philosophical conflicts.

Karnad has explored different thematic strands in his plays, ranging from history to myth, politics and religion. Karnad's famous historical plays are *Tughlaq* (1964), *Tippuvina Kanasugalu* (*The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*) (2004) and *Talé-Daṇḍa*, also known as *Rakt-Kalyan* in Hindi (1990). The plays *Yayati* (1961), *Agni Mattu Male* (1995) [*Agni Aur Varsha, The Fire and the Rain* (1998)] and *Maa Nishaadha, Bali: The Sacrifice* (2004) are drawn from Indians myths. *Hayavadana* (1972) and *Nāga-Mandala* (1988) are based on folktales. *Odakalu Bimba* [Hindi, *Bikre Bimb*;

English, *Broken Images* (2004)], *Flowers* (2004) are monologues. Karnad's play titled *Wedding Album* was published in 2009 and *Boiled Beans on Toast: A Play* in 2014.

During his formative years, Karnad was influenced by *Yakshagana* plays in Kannada that went a long way into shaping his dramatic taste and genius. The earliest influence on the playwright was that of the *Natak Mandalis,* the travelling theatre groups that were in vogue in Sirsi, Karnataka at that time. The *Yakshagana* plays which he used to watch with his domestic helpers also appealed to him by their buffoonery and horseplay. Karnad was also influenced by Brecht and Shakespeare. His reading of western playwrights made him sharply aware of theatricality, imaginativeness and the inherent power of the Indian theatre. Karnad's interest in Brecht's plays sensitized him to the rich potentialities of the use of non-naturalistic technique. He was influenced more strongly by Henrik Ibsen, an outstanding figure in dramatic art and whose works became the model for many dramatists. Karnad has acquired much of the deftness of Henrik Ibsen; hence he allows symbolism to permeate his plays. By using symbols and myths, he ensures an accretion of meanings and nuances in his plays.

Although a lot of research has been done on various critical aspects of Karnad's plays, all these studies focus mostly on the thematic strands, characterization, plot structure, use of myths in his plays, etc. Karnad's dramatic technique, despite forming an important component of his plays, still remains an unexplored dimension of his work. The main aim of this study is to examine and evaluate the major plays of Karnad with a focus on the dramatic technique. The study also examines Karnad's views about technique and draws an overview of his dramatic style and elements to acquire an insight into the philosophical and literary influences that shaped his art. Different dramatic techniques employed by Karnad in his major plays are analyzed in depth in the thesis to study how the techniques work with the themes and complement them.

Chapter Two titled 'Vivifying History, Myth and Folklore,' examines Dramatic Irony, Speech Devices, Symbolism and Masks as important aspects of dramatic technique in Karnad's *Tughlaq*, *Nāga-Mandala* and *Hayavadana.* Each of

these techniques enhances the meaning and effectiveness of the plays and creates a lasting impact on the minds of the readers.

Dramatic irony is a special kind of suspenseful expectation, when the audience foresees the oncoming disaster or triumph, but the character does not. This dramatic technique was employed and popularized by Shakespeare to heighten the theme of his plays. The events which are represented in drama by disguise, deception, and mistaken identity are presented in such a way that they are known to the audience, but not to the characters themselves. So with the use of dramatic irony, the dramatist places the audience at a privileged position by allowing them to know the hidden truth.

Symbolism is a late nineteenth and early twentieth century movement, in poetry and other literary arts wherein symbolic figures of speech, indirect suggestions to express emotions, mystical ideas and states of mind were used. In *Hayavadana*, symbolic elements are repeatedly used in the beginning of Act One. When the play begins, a mask of Ganesha is brought on the stage to pay him obeisance and begin the performance. Lord Ganesha is projected as the destroyer of obstacles but is the embodiment of imperfection and incompleteness. This symbolizes alienation since Lord Ganesha's head and his body is not compatible with one another. The play *Nāga-Mandala* starts with female flames narrating stories to each other. The flames symbolize women who are famous for gathering, gossiping and making up stories. In *Tughlaq*, in the scene where the king is playing the game of chess symbolizes his manipulative ways to deal with political rivals with an aim to win at any cost.

The mask, another dramatic device, is a multidimensional, multifaceted entity which portrays a particular kind of character – a hero, a devil, a ghost or any mythological character. It can also be used to characterize Gods, human figures or even animals. Masks are one of the most potential adjuncts for characterization in drama. Masks are very effective in conveying subtle messages to the audience as they can be tragic in expression, conveying mourning or pain; vicious, to express cruelty and cunning; and can be comic, thus evoking laughter. In *Hayavadana*, all the three major characters of the play – the two men with the transposed heads and the one with the horse's head, wear masks. The individual masks portray the qualities of Kapila

and Devadatta, and the transposition of heads, depicted by an exchange of masks indicates the exchange of qualities between both of them.

Chapter Three titled 'Dramatizing Spectacle and Action' deals with the concepts Plot and Subplot, Costume, Stage combat and Lighting in Karnad's plays – *Yayati, Talé-Daṇḍa* and *The Fire and the Rain.* Lighting along with costumes, sounds, makeup and other theatrical techniques coordinates and works well to deliver the right impact of the theme and the plot.

A Plot is the sequence of events that make up a story. According to Aristotle, a plot has a beginning, middle, and an end – technically, the Protasis, Epitasis, and Catastrophe. A Subplot is a secondary strand of the plot that is a supporting side-story for any story or the main plot. Subplots may connect to main plots, in either time or place or in thematic significance. In *Yayati*, the plot has a simple story of characters whose lives are intertwined leading to dilemmas at every point in time. There are four main characters viz. Pooru, King Yayati, his wife and the narrator *Sutradhar*, whereas the subplot focuses on King Yayati's wife Devayani and the maid Sharmishtha. In *The Fire and the Rain* the plot of the drama is a trilogy with the initial parts focused on the protagonist returning home after a prolonged absence. Characters like Nittilai, the tribals and Arvasu make up the subplot. In *Talé-Daṇḍa,* the exposition of the play opens up with the introductory scenes of the major characters: Jagadeva, his father Sambashiva Shastri, who is on his death-bed, Bijjala, Manchanna and the central figure of the play, Basavanna. The subplot in *Talé-Daṇḍa* is of Sovideva, Damodar and Manchanna when they hatch a plot against the king Bijjala.

Costumes as an art form have played a significant role in defining particular aspects of the personality, gender and social status of the characters. They establish the time period as well as culture of a nation or a country. Costumes, along with make-up, can communicate age, health and other traits of personality to convey information about the character. They are also a pointer to a character's social and economic status, cultural background as well as his/her sense of fashion. In *Yayati*, the use of costumes is again a powerful signifier and emphasizes cultural differences. In Act One, Sharmishtha, the tribal girl, explains how she loved and respected the bond of friendship with Devayani in their childhood. Once when Sharmishtha inadvertently

wears Devayani's dress the unbridgeable gap between the two castes becomes so obvious by the exchange of the dress that it leads to bitter feeling between the two friends.

Stage Combat is a specialised technique that creates the illusion of physical combat without causing actual harm to the performers. In Karnad's *Yayati*, Sharmishtha and Devayani fight over Devayani's royal dress and this disturbs Sharmishtha. A scene is narrated where Sharmishtha pulls her friend by her hair towards the well and pushes her in. The stagecraft makes the audience believe in this act although nobody sees it actually happening on stage. In Karnad's *Talé-Daṇḍa*, Jagadeva's killing of King Bijjala is described by the narrator without actually showing the act of assassination.

Stage Lighting is related to the craft of lighting on the stage for drama, dances, opera and other performing arts. Lighting serves to direct the focus, mood and atmosphere for the audience, whether romantic or intense. It also sets the location and time of the day, whether it is sunrise or sunset, day or night, indoors or outdoors, weather conditions such as lightening, storm or rain. In Scene Two of *Talé-Daṇḍa*, Kallapa, the king's bodyguard tells King Bijjala about the morning incident where Basavanna performed a miracle. With the help of lighting the audience can direct their attention to the main performer in that particular act, or to actions happening simultaneously to different characters on the stage.

Chapter Four titled 'Enhancing the Visual and Aural Elements' covers Karnad's plays: *Bali: The Sacrifice, The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* and his monologues *Flowers* and *Broken Images*. The techniques used in these plays are Imagery, Props, Music and Sounds.

Imagery is a writing technique that consists of descriptive language, which helps to create an image and capture the mood of the reader and the audience. It clarifies a concept by immediately helping to draw a picture in mind with the kind of setting in which the story takes place. In *Bali: The Sacrifice* the use of lamps in the ancient temple and torches by the King's people in search of the Queen is both used literally and metaphorically. The exclusion of natural light in itself depicts that the Mahout and the Queen's relationship was illicit and unacceptable to society. In

Flowers, the time of the priest's visit to Ranganayaki's house has been described as the tranquillity of the night, thus creating a suitable environment for decorating her body with flowers and lovemaking. The 'image' referred to in the title of *Broken Images* is the electronic image which projects what would happen when instead of interaction with other images, one is forced to confront one's own image.

Props are objects or properties or physical things that are commonly used on stage or on-screen performances. Anything that is movable or portable on the stage apart from costumes, sceneries or other equipment is considered as a prop. Props bridge the gap between the character and the setting by giving a new dimension and colour to the world within the play. In *Bali: The Sacrifice,* the use of props like silver plates and incense sticks for worshipping, swords in wars, and lamps and torches are the vital elements necessary to the action. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan,* the king's use of belt and sword as a part of his attire and torch is another example of props. In *Flowers,* camphor, coconut, wicks, silver plates used while performing the *aarti* in the temple have been included as hand props to create a religious atmosphere. In *Broken Images,* a big plasma screen, tele-table, chairs, TV and microphone have been used as set props, which create the set of a studio for the live interview of the protagonist Manjula Nayak.

Human beings have a strong relationship with music, as it is an audible and rhythmic way of expressing emotional states, feelings and thoughts. It makes the scenes and interludes of the play interesting by creating a new atmosphere, thus helping the audience to connect with the play. Karnad's *Bali: The Sacrifice* opens up with the Queen's song when she is secretly meeting the mahout in the ruined temple. The song depicts the two different worlds to which both of them belong, the two worlds that are actually same but can never come together. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* there is music of celebration and cheering when Tipu Sultan is with Mir Sadiq and Kirmani. It also runs in the background to express the arrival or departure of the Sultan. In *Flowers* the musical sound of the temple bells transports the audience to the setting of a temple. Music is one of the intrinsic features of these plays that evoke feelings of sensual love, religious fervor, or the spirit of celebration.

The playwrights make use of a wide variety of sounds in complex combinations to the dialogues spoken by the actors. These sound effects recreate life-like noises to support the situation being portrayed. This technique is generally used to establish location, weather and time of day or something happening offstage. In *Bali: The Sacrifice,* the moaning of the Queen depicts the sound of a scuffle between the Mahout and the Queen. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* the salute of guns is used to convey the celebrations of the Sultan. Soldiers running and enemies approaching are depicted by the sounds of footsteps. In *Flowers*, the arrival of the chieftain in the temple coincides with the sounds of the canon. In *Broken Images*, the sound of hammering on the laptop displays the anger and frustration of Manjula Nayak when her plagiarism is exposed.

Seeds of modern Indian theatre were sown during the mid-twentieth century, soon after India's independence, and the result was a blend of eastern and western culture in the themes, dramatic techniques and stage presentation of the plays. It began when the stories about the lives of heroes, Gods and celestial beings were replaced by the portrayal of the daily life of a common man, the day-to-day challenges faced by them, their fears and tears. Chapter Five titled 'Towards a Modernist Poetics' examines the modernist elements in his plays through a focus on the playwright's self-conscious experimentation with folk conventions and the modern dramatic techniques.

Modernism as a movement in the early twentieth century involved a rejection and a questioning of the conventions of Realism. It was a philosophic and artistic response to change over from the realist methods to modern methods which would represent the contemporary age more closely. Long-standing theatrical forms like Naturalism and Realism and their consensus between author and reader were challenged and it paved the way for a new type of modern theatre. Expressionism, Surrealism, Symbolism, and Experimental theatre were reflections of the modernist perspectives in art and culture. In the early 1920s, Surrealism, a literary and artistic movement gathered pace in Paris which focused on removing the traditions of society that curtailed freedom of thought. Modern man's dilemmatic condition as well as his isolated and meaningless existence in a materialistic and capitalistic social order was expressed by existential writers. Symbolism was a late

nineteenth century movement, in poetry and other arts, wherein symbolic figures of speech were used to represent an idea. The elements of Modernism are clearly discernible in Karnad's major plays which employ a variety of unconventional techniques that focus on the artificial nature of the text as well as the role of the playwright in creating the world within the play.

Drama is written to be performed rather than to be read. Hence the dramatist employs dramatic devices or techniques suitable for the stage while also using literary devices that are available for novelists. Girish Karnad has successfully brought in many levels of meaning into his plays through the dramatic devices that he has adopted. This thesis has attempted to argue that the dramatic technique employed by Karnad has provided him tools to develop ideas, characters and plots, thus sharpening the focus and adding another dimension to his plays. Through an amalgamation of ancient Indian beliefs and contemporary issues Karnad has brought to the surface the psychological conflicts as experienced by individuals, both modern and mythical, in challenging circumstances. Karnad captures modern anxieties and dilemmas by reworking ancient Indian tales in the form of plays. The varied dramatic techniques that Karnad uses contribute to the artistic commingling of the Indian sensibility with the western dramatic tradition in his plays.

The final chapter, Conclusion, presents an overview of the basic findings of this thesis and focuses on Karnad's dramatic technique, which forms an important component of his plays. Different dramatic techniques employed by Karnad in his major plays are analyzed in depth in the thesis with a special reference to the concomitant relation of these techniques with the themes of his plays. This research will open new vistas for a greater understanding of the talent and technique that characterizes Girish Karnad's dramatic art.

CONTENTS

Chapter One

Introduction

The essence of life is revealed in all genres of literature, including poetry, fiction and drama. Drama being essentially a social art is perhaps the most important form of literature that leads to a comprehensive understanding of the society and the individual. The roots of the theatre in India go back to the ancient times during the 1st century C.E. Records of Sanskrit drama written in that period still exist. The *Mahabhasya* written around 4th century B.C., by Patanjali, is a treatise on grammar that contains the earliest references to the evolution of Sanskrit drama. In the earlier times in India, drama formed a part of the life of the common people in the form of musical performances, dance, storytelling and tableaux during festivals or on special occasions. Subsequently its different forms were adopted by the upper stratum of society and continued as such for many more years. Theatrical activities with elements of music, dance and acting had been popular in India as early as in the nineteenth century when Mohan Banerjee wrote a play about the prevalent social practices and customs in India in his *The Persecuted: or, Dramatic Scenes Illustrative of the Present State of Hindu Society in Calcutta* (1831).Another benchmark is Michael Madhusudan Dutt's play titled *Is This Called Civilization?* (1871) that was initially written in Bengali but later translated into English. It is believed that the real journey of Indian English drama began with this play.

Specific information about the initial, primitive stage of drama and theatre in India and its evolution is very meagre. But it can safely be asserted that in India, as in other cultures, drama originated through primitive magical, religious or social rites, ritualistic dances, communal ceremonies and celebration of festivals. As ballads and old folk tales are considered forms of the oral tradition, they gradually acquired a dramatic form as they were passed on through the generations.

According to the Indian view of life, the purpose of drama and theatre is to create a feeling of pleasure or bliss (*Rāsa*) by delineating different situations, mental states and emotions of human beings. It has the ability to cleanse the human soul by

purgation. Before human beings developed the ability to read or write, stories were passed on from generation to generation either orally or through enactment. Translations from regional Indian languages to English gradually paved the way for the growth of Indian drama in English. Dramatists like Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar and Girish Karnad became popular not only in Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and Kannada, but also in all the Indian languages of modern Indian theatre through their innovative dramatic works and enactment of plays on the stage.

A historical perspective of the evolution and the growth of Indian drama will enable the reader to place Karnad in the Indian literary context. Coming later in the Indian literary scenario, Karnad has made a significant contribution to the development of a new dramatic form wherein the dramatic technique serves to compliment the theme of the plays. Indian drama has a long and rich historical past. Devendra Raj Ankur in the article "Indian theatre: Inheritance, Transitions and Future Options", attempts to classify Indian drama according to its chronological evolution. According to Ankur, the development of Indian theatre can be roughly divided into three distinctive phases: the Classical Period (Phase I), the Traditional Period (Phase II) and the Modern Period (Phase III).

The Classical Period (Phase I) includes the writing and practice of the playwrights up to 1000 A.D., such as Bhasa, Kalidasa, Shudraka, Vishakhadatta and Bhavabhuti who contributed to Indian theatre in a great measure through their dramatic pieces in Sanskrit. Their plays were mostly based on the dramatic rules as propounded by Bharata in his *Nātyaśāstra* that elucidates the principles regarding the writing, performances and conventions of staging the plays. The plots of the plays of the classical period were based on sources like the epics, legends, history and folk tales. As the audience was already familiar with the story, the visual presentations in the theatre used only gestures, mime and body movements as theatre language. Each actor was expected to be learned and skilled in all the fine

arts. The author points out that even the noted German playwright and director Brecht evolved his theory of 'Epic Theatre' and the concept of 'Alienation' from these sources. This kind of theatre was much more sophisticated in its form and was urban-oriented to please the kings and the courtiers.

The Traditional period (Phase II), was based on oral versions of the fables as theatrical traditions. It is considered as the phase between 1000 A.D. to 1700 A.D. The tradition of this phase still continues in many parts of India. It is believed that the emergence of this kind of theatre is due to the political set-up in India as well as the coming into existence of different regional languages in all parts of the country. As the new languages originated around 1000 A.D. and it was too early to expect any writing in those languages, this whole period is known as the period of traditional folk tales. As folk tales and myths were handed over from generation to generation they were modified according to the need of the times. Traditional theatre evolved out of rural roots and therefore was not as sophisticated as the classical theatre but was more simple and spontaneous. The stories were based on mythology and were woven around great heroes. The presentation was mainly vocal and recitation-based as in *Ramlila*, *Rasleela* and *Nautanki* and involved elements of dance and physical hand and body gestures.

The Modern Period (Phase III) shows the influence of British Raj and its political reign for two hundred years in India. There was a direct exposure of western theatre on Indian playwrights and its influence on Indian theatre was visibly marked. During this phase the written version of dramas became popular and provided scripts to be enacted for theatre enthusiasts. The elements of theatre remained almost the same, i.e., use of music, mime, movement, dance and narrative elements. In the modern theatre, the story also changed its focus. In this phase, the subject of the stories and plots mainly projected the picture of a common man.

The changing social conditions in the late nineteenth century made new values and outlook possible in Indian drama. The plays that were written were adapted quite early in the form of dramatic performances. The popularity of theatre was enhanced by the fact that all the great actors participated in professional theatre, and both the urban and the rural spectators went to watch plays to see their favourite stars on stage.

For almost a hundred years – from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1950s, Parsi theatre dominated the Indian cultural scene. Its most creative period (1870-1890), brought about a complete change in the outlook, perception and attitude of the people towards theatre. The first drama company named Parsi Natak Mandali (established in 1853), under the proprietorship of Faramjee G. Dalal staged the first drama *Rustom and Sohrab* in 1853 at the Grant Road Theatre, Mumbai. Thereafter, twenty more Parsi drama companies were formed, giving a further momentum to the theatrical activities in Maharashtra and in the south. The Balewala Company formed in 1882, consisted of a troupe of Parsi players who performed at the royal court of Mysore. The company made use of sophisticated devices in its productions. The Parsis viewed theatre as a medium through which they could communicate with the ordinary people. The theatre that arose out of these motivations had themes that carried moral and social messages for the audience. This laid the foundation for the changing concept of theatre.

The first ever professional theatre in Karnataka, Sri Chamarajendra Karnataka Nataka Sabha also came into existence during the 1880s. This period of development of drama and theatre was associated with the emergence of two prominent Kannada writers – T.P. Kailasam (1886-1946) and Adya Rangacharya (1904-1984). Both had studied in England and were influenced by the serious and ironic comedies of George Bernard Shaw and the tragedies of Henrik Ibsen. The plays of Kailasam and Rangacharya left a deep impact on the audience and the

theatre due to the influence of western drama, and laid the foundations for the newer generations of dramatists. Another famous Kannada dramatist, Bellave Narahari Sastry (1882-1961) also attracted the audience in his own way. He defined and set the standards for professional drama writing. His plays were mostly based on mythological themes taken from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Bhagvata Gita*. The plays were satirical, intense and comical at times. Drama subsequently developed at a fast pace in India and came to depend less on the plot than on the total experience provided by the production as a whole.

The pre-independence Indian theatre was represented mostly by the Bhartiya Natya Sangh, the Indian National Theatre, and the Ebrahim Alkazi theatre unit. In the post-independence era, the National School of Drama and the Sangeet Natak Academy were established as official theatrical bodies. Some of the leading playwrights during the nineteen fifties in India include Mahesh Dattani, Manjula Padmanabhan, Asif Curimbhoy and Gurcharan Das. The plays of Dharamvir Bharti, Badal Sircar, Mohan Rakesh, Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar and a host of other writers also became popular during this period and infused new life in Indian drama. They explored modern dilemmas of the postcolonial age using the metaphor and the motifs of classical Indian plays. Other popular playwrights who wrote plays in regional languages that were later translated into English are P. Lankesh, Nisar Ahmed, Chandrasekar Kambar and U.R. Ananthamurthy, among others. Other stalwarts were Rabindranath Tagore, Shri Aurobindo, Harindranath Chattopadhyay, T.P. Kailasam, Bharathi Sarabhai and J.M. Lobo Prabhu, who wrote their plays in English and contributed to Indian drama and literature.

Girish Raghunath Karnad, known for his versatile genius, is one of the greatest dramatists of Indo-Anglian literature. He is a multi-faceted artist – playwright, poet, actor, director, critic, translator and cultural administrator. Karnad has earned wide acclaim for the complex treatment of the themes of his plays which

focus on existential issues and explore the human predicament. His search is directed towards the subconscious level of the human psyche as a result of which his characters are multi-layered and reflect various hidden elements of the inner world. He has been rightly called the "Renaissance man" whose popularity is based on decades of prolific and consistent literary output on the native soil. (Kalidas and Merchant).

In the introduction to the volume *Three Plays*, Karnad points out that in the mid-twentieth century, writers felt the need to resolve the conflict between two contradictory impulses faced by Indians in the newly independent country. He states that it was a stage when playwrights felt unsure about their allegiance to the native culture since the British rule had left an indelible impression on Indian modes of thought, and needed to come to terms with "Tensions between the cultural past of the country and its colonial past, between the attractions of Western modes of thought and they our own traditions, and finally between the various visions of future that opened up once the common cause of political freedom was achieved" (Karnad "Author's Introduction" 1). Many modern dramatists like Karnad at that time felt the impulse of decolonizing the Indian theatre and retracing it back to its roots of classical and folk theatre.

Badal Sircar turned to folk forms in his plays, to make his work more effective for the urban frame. He states, "probably everybody would agree that the concept of theatre came from the west. But now with the complexity of middle class increasing, we are searching for new forms because we are finding the 'naturalistic form' and the proscenium arch inadequate to voice our problems" (38). The theatre of early post-independence years indicated a desire for the revival of Indian culture, protecting it and giving it a new recognition. In *Poetics, Plays and Performances* by Vasudha Dalmiya, Vijay Tendulkar expressed this dilemma by stating, "I would like to indulge in some folk form that would suit my needs … I want to find my way

out" (176). Girish Karnad explains in the same context: "I mean I am attracted by the *Yakshagana* form. I write a play in Dharwad, using the *Yakshagana* form because I feel, in one particular play it helps me to give a form to what I want to say" (176).

Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), the German dramatist and poet, had a great impact on the Indian playwrights. In his plays, he has synthesized the folk with the urban which does not conform to the dramatic concepts of Aristotle. R. N. Rai comments on Brecht's dramatic technique, "Brecht recommends the kind of drama that turns the spectator into an observer and arouses his capacity to act. He discourages identification and forbids empathy between spectator and the stage" (20). Brecht introduced a revolutionary change in the concept of theatre by emphasizing the need for 'alienation' i.e. detachment and re-orientation for the audience. Brecht was anti-cathartic in approach and wanted his audience to judge the action on stage critically and intellectually using their rational faculty rather than being emotionally involved in the fate of the character. This technique was appropriate for the modern urban audience. Vasudha Dalmia comments, "Brecht's theatre … was to provide one way of making social and political aspects of urban theatre amenable to exposition by technique culled from folk forms" (177).

Brecht's influence on Karnad made him sharply aware of theatricality, imaginativeness and the inherent power of the Indian theatre. Karnad states, "And it must be admitted that Brecht's influence, received mainly through his writings and without the benefit of his theatrical productions, went some way in making us realize what could be done with the design of traditional theatre" (Karnad "Author's Introduction"14). Karnad's reading and witnessing of Brecht's plays sensitized him to the rich potentialities of non-naturalistic technique of the traditional Indian theatre.

During the mid-twentieth century there was felt a need to break the old moulds of Indian classical tradition of playwriting and find expression for new and complex needs. Post-independence playwrights were writing plays for the urban audience and could not depend only on the western dramatic tradition to present the Indian perspective. The rich tradition of Indian playwritings in indigenous languages enabled them to combine the new with the old. The foremost concern of these playwrights was to coin a modern urban idiom, using the vocabulary and language of folk forms. These playwrights explored modern dilemmas of the post-colonial age using the metaphor and the motifs of classical Indian plays.

Contemporary Indian drama has made use of bold innovations and experiments both in terms of themes and technique. Indian dramatists have used myth, folklore and Indian history and have employed shifting temporal settings, dream sequences, masks and voice-overs in their plays. They have not only assimilated the elements of the Indian theatrical tradition but also borrowed from the modern western dramatists such as Bertolt Brecht, Jean Paul Sartre, Harold Pinter, Samuel Beckett and others.

Girish Karnad (1938) belonged to that group of post-independence playwrights, who experimented with form to enrich the dramatic technique and highlight the Indian sensibility. Karnad upheld the traditional values on the urban stage while exploring modern themes to express the dilemmas of the contemporary society. Folk conventions like the use of masks, chorus, spectacle and the mixing of human and non-human worlds offered him the technical freedom to cater to the psychological needs of the society.

Today ranked as one of the frontline playwrights in contemporary Indian theatre, Karnad, for four decades, has been composing plays using history and mythology to represent contemporary issues. Karnad blends history with the modern man’s dilemma – the anguish of alienation and the absurdity of the human situation.

Being a modern dramatist, Karnad expresses his viewpoint through symbols and motifs. Jasbir Jain observes that contemporary drama in English, "has had several interrupted moments of visibility and creativity, and has adopted itself to translated versions and ideas transmitted from one culture to another" ("The Curious Journey" 25).

Born on 19 May 1938 in Matheran, a town near Bombay, Karnad hails from the family of Konkani Saraswat Brahmins of Mangalore. His childhood was spent in a small village called Sirsi in Karnataka where he had first-hand experience of the indigenous folk theatre of that region. This influence of the *Yakshagana* plays that Karnad watched during his childhood was instrumental in his growth as a playwright. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and Statistics from Karnatak Arts College, Dharwad (Karnataka University) in 1958. Karnad graduated from England and studied Philosophy, Political Science and Economics at Lincoln and Magdalen colleges in Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar (1960-63). On his return to India in 1963, he joined the Oxford University Press, Madras. This offered him an opportunity to explore various kinds of writings in India and abroad. Such influences made an indelible mark on his creative genius and he earned international fame by writing and translating his plays in English. His first play *Yayati* was translated into English by Priya Adarkar and after some time again by himself.

In 1974, Karnad was appointed Director of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. He was the Indian Co-Chairman for the Joint Media Committee of the Indo-US Sub-Commission on Education and Culture from 1984-93.In 1987, he went to the US as Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago. It was during his tenure at Chicago that his play *Nāga-mandala,* based on an English translation of the Kannada play originally written by Karnad himself, had its world premiere at the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis. From 1988 to 1993, he worked as Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi (National Academy for Performing Arts), New Delhi. In

1994, Karnad was awarded the Doctor of Letters degree by the Karnataka University, Dharwad. He also served as Director of the Nehru Centre and as Minister of Culture, in the Indian High Commission, London from2000 to 2003.

Karnad has explored different thematic strands in his plays, ranging from history to myth, politics and religion. Karnad's famous plays are *Yayati* (1961), *Tughlaq* (1964), *Hayavadana* (1972), *Anju Mallige* (1977), *HittinaHunja* (1980), *Nāga-mandala* (1988), *Talé-Daṇḍa* also known as *Rakt-Kalyan* in Hindi (1990), *Agni mattu Male* (1995) [*Agni AurVarsha*, *The Fire and the Rain* (1998)], *MaaNishaadha*, *Bali: The Sacrifice* (2004), and *Tippuvina Kanasugalu* (*The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*). The plays *OdakaluBimba*, [Hindi, *Bikre Bimb*; English, *Broken Images* (2004)] and *Flowers* (2004) are monologues. His recent plays are *Wedding Album* (2009) and *Boiled Beans on Toast: A Play* (2014). Karnad has played the role of Karadi, the *sutradhar* (narrator), for several stories in the popular audio book series for kids, *Karadi Tales*. He has also been the voice of the late Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the former President of India, in the audio-book of Dr. Kalam's autobiography titled *Wings of Fire*.

Karnad's plays provide enough scope for being enacted and the story is usually a reworking of ancient myths, folk literature and history. As the archetypal has the ability to move across language and culture, the transferring of myth to the stage enables a crossing over into the present. Karnad's search is directed towards the unknown region of the human psyche, as a result of which his characters are multi-layered and reflect various levels of the inner world. He has delved deeper into the inner recesses of the minds of his characters that are alienated and lonely and in a challenging and difficult phase of their life. Karnad's plays, although rooted in Indian mythology, convey a strong western philosophical sensibility. In Karnad's works, the existentialist crisis of a modern man is conveyed through strong individuals who are locked in intense psychological and philosophical conflicts.

Karnad is a man of excellent intellectual abilities, and strikes a balance between intellect and emotions in his plays. He was conferred the Padma Shri in 1974 and the Padma Bhushan in 1992 by the Government of India. He was a recipient of the Jnanpith Award for Kannada in 1998, the highest literary honour conferred in India. Some of the other major awards received by Karnad are: Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1972, Sahitya Academy Award in 1994, Kalidas Samman in 1998, Honorary Doctorate, University of Southern California, Los Angeles in 2011.

Karnad's talent has been widely recognised and acknowledged. He has also received the Mysore State Award for *Yayati* (1962), Government of Mysore Rajyotsava Award (1970), the Homi Bhabha Fellowship for creative work in folk theatre (1970-72), The Kamaladevi Award of the Bharatiya NatyaSangh for the Best Indian play of the year for *Hayavadana* (1972), the Karnataka Nataka Academy Award (1984), the Nandikar, Calcutta, Award for Playwriting (1989), "Writer of the Year" Award from Granthaloka Journal of the Book Trade for *Talé-Daṇḍa* (1990), the Karnataka Sahitya Academy Award for the Most Creative Work for *Nāga-mandala* (1992), the B.H. Sridhar Award and the Karnataka Sahitya Academy Award for Best Play for *Talé-Daṇḍa* (1992), the Booksellers and Publishers Association of South India Award (1992), a Special Honour Award from the Karnataka Sahitya Academy (1994) and the Gubbi Veeranna Award (1996-97).

Karnad made his acting as well as screenwriting debut in a Kannada movie, *Samskara* (1970) which won the first Golden Lotus Award for Kannada cinema. Over the years Karnad had acted in a number of Hindi and Kannada feature films. His most popular television role was of Swami's father in TV series *Malgudi Days* that was telecasted all over India in 1987. He made his directorial debut with *Vamsha Vriksha* (1971), which won him the National Film Award for Best Direction. Many of his films and documentaries have won several national and

international awards.Some of his famous Kannada movies include *Kaadu* (1973), *Tabbaliyu Neenade Magane* (1977), *Ondanondu Kaladalli* (1978), *Cheluvi* (1992) and *Kanooru Heggaditi* (1999), based on a novel by Kannada writer Kuvempu. He has acted in several Hindi movies includig films like *Nishaant* (1975), *Manthan* (1976), *Swami* (1977) and *Pukar* (2000). He has acted in a number of Nagesh Kukunoor films, including *Iqbal* (2005) written by Vipul K. Rawal, where his role of the ruthless cricket coach got him critical acclaim. This was followed by *Dor* (2006), *8 x 10 Tasveer* (2009), with lead actor Akshay Kumar, *Aashayein* (2010), *Ek Tha Tiger* with Salman Khan (2013) and his latest film being *Chalk n Duster* (2016). He wrote the first part of his biography in Kannada in 2011, titled *Aadaadtha Aayushya*. (Life moves on while playing) in which he has penned his memoirs until the time of his marriage. Karnad is married to Dr. Saraswathy Ganapathy and has two children Shalmali Radha and Raghu Amay, and lives in Bangalore.

Karnad initially wanted to be a poet and compose poetry in English. As a result, he spent many of his early years writing poetry. He wanted to go abroad and study, and recounts the conflict he experienced at that point of time, “My family was of course delighted, but it was close-knit and I was the first of its members to go abroad” (“Theatre in India” 333). He felt divided between the responsibility towards his family and his career abroad. Due to the inner conflict he was experiencing before leaving for England, he found himself writing plays based on ancient Indian mythology and it was just a chance that Karnad became a dramatist. He continues:“In the midst of these tensions, a few weeks before leaving for England, I suddenly found myself writing a play... I had always imagined I was a poet” (333). Karnad realised that writing a play came easier to him than writing poetry and he had wasted his initial years trying to be a poet. He was more comfortable in expressing his thoughts through a genre that allowed greater freedom and development of thought. “But here I was writing a play and in Kannad, too, the

language spoken by a few million people in South India, the language of my childhood. A greater surprise was the theme of the play, for it was taken from ancient Indian mythology from which I had believed myself alienated" (Karnad "Author's Introduction" 2-3).

Karnad's plays are neither written in English nor in his mother tongue Konkani. Instead they are composed in his adopted language Kannada and thereafter translated by himself into English – the language of his adulthood. The Indian cultural heritage was visible in the folk theatre forms like *Yakshagana*, *Ramlila*, *Bhavai* etc. which were all being performed in various regions across India. During his formative years, Karnad was mainly influenced by *Yakshagana* plays in Kannada that went a long way into shaping his dramatic taste and genius. The earliest influence on the playwright was that of the *Natak Mandalis*, the travelling theatre groups that were in vogue in Sirsi, Karnataka at that time. The *Yakshagana* plays which he used to watch with his domestic helpers also appealed to him by their buffoonery and horseplay. These plays were staged in semi-permanent structures on proscenium stages, with wings and drop curtains and illuminated by petromax lamps. Karnad states, "Once the harvest was over, I went with the servants to sit up nights watching the more traditional *Yakshagana* performances....By the time I was in my early teens, the *natak companies* had ceased to function and *Yakshagana* had begun to seem quaint, even silly, to me" (*Collected Plays I*:302). The changing environment in the post-independent India gradually restricted the touring drama companies' performances.

The impact of Kannada drama was quite profound and deep on Karnad. When he started writing plays, Kannada literature was strongly inspired by the Renaissance in Western literature. Influenced by western drama, Kannada writers would choose subjects which seemed incongruous in the Indian milieu. C. Rajagopalachari's version of the Mahabharata published in 1951, left a deep

impact on Karnad, and soon based on this, his first play *Yayati* was conceptualized and published in 1961. He tells in an interview with Arundhati Nag, "I was reading Rajaji's (C. Rajagopalachari) Mahabharata and from that I got both the stories, *Yayati* and *The Fire and the Rain*....I read the *Yayati* story and the play happened in front of my eyes. *Yayati* just came to me like a dictation." Karnad represents the best traditions of the Kannada drama which was quite rich with romantic plays, tragedies, comedies, poetic and blank verse plays.

It was in the India of the nineteen fifties and sixties that there surfaced two streams of thought in all walks of life – the adoption of new modernistic techniques – a legacy of the colonial rule, and adherence to the rich cultural past of the country. Karnad's plays had effectively demonstrated how Indian English drama could revitalize itself by employing indigenous subjects, characters, language, folk theatre and *natak company* conventions and de-colonize Indian English drama. R.K. Dhawan examines the impact of the contemporary socio-cultural and literary milieu on Karnad, and notes: "Karnad was fascinated by the traditional plays; nonetheless the Western playwrights that he read during his college days opened up for him a new world of magical possibilities" (14).

Karnad was a part of apolitical and literary era where there was a discord between native and western traditions. Karnad explains: "My generation was the first to come of age after India became independent of British rule. It therefore had to face a situation in which tensions implicit until then had come out in the open and demanded to be resolved without apologia or self-justification...This is the historical context that gave rise to my plays and those of my contemporaries" (Karnad "Author's Introduction"1).

It was by the mid-twentieth century, that some of the famous Indian dramatists started writing under the influence of British and Greek dramatists like Shakespeare, Brecht, Ibsen and G. B. Shaw. Karnad was also influenced by Brecht

and Shakespeare, and more strongly by Henrik Ibsen, an outstanding figure in dramatic art, whose works became the model for many dramatists. Karnad has acquired much of the deftness of Henrik Ibsen; hence he allows symbolism to permeate his plays. By using symbols and myths, he ensures an accretion of meanings and nuances in his plays. Karnad discovered himself as a dramatist under the influence of Jean Anouilh and Albert Camus whose plays *Antigone* and *Caligula* greatly inspired *Yayati* and *Tughlaq*.

Karnad being a man of theatre has been actively associated with the stage and has written plays with an eye to their production and performance. Karnad's plays reveal a healthy tension between tradition and contemporaneity. He goes back to local and old practices, which were part of his childhood environment. His style is simple and the dialogues are suited well for the Indian sensibilities and ethos. Karnad's works in the theatre reveal two outstanding qualities: a continuous experimentation with dramatic form and a deep involvement with the human condition in its contemporary as well as universal manifestation. His plays explore the human psyche and its social environment and sometimes adhere to their traditional *puranic* themes.

Karnad described himself as belonging to the first generation of playwrights to come of age after India became independent. Of his nine plays, six are based on myths and legends, two on history and only one on contemporary "émigré" experience. Girish Karnad goes back to myths and legends with a view to making them a vehicle of a new vision. By employing the various myths, he shows the absurdity of modern life with all its elemental passions and conflicts and man's eternal struggle to attain perfection. Karnad states in *Authors Speak*, "A play can be only as contemporary as the playwright is. If the writer does not have contemporary convictions or is not committed, the play will not be contemporary." (Satchidanandan 75).

Karnad's output which ranges from *Yayati* to *Boiled Beans on the Toast: A Play* marks the evolution of Indian theatre of the last four decades. Tutun Mukherjee compares Karnad's plays to Jean Genet's work by quoting Richard N. Coe's comment, "Karnad's plays represent the junction point at which 'dream is simultaneously reality, where the invisible coincides with the visible, where the object is both itself at the revelation of something not-itself'" (Mukherjee 17).According to M.K. Naik, Karnad's technical experiments with an indigenous dramatic form "opened up fresh lines of fruitful exploration for the Indian English playwright" (*A History* 97).

Karnad's plays are multi-layered, complex and reveal the careful use of dramatic technique. He blends history with the modern man's dilemma – the anguish of alienation and the absurdity of the human situation. In Karnad's plays the world of reality and fantasy or illusion meet in such a way that a new ontological plane is created. He is skilful in the use of contraries and binaries and co-relates both incident and situation with characterization. Deft in the art of plot construction, Karnad pays great attention to even the minor and subtle aspects of the plot. All the incidents are well-knit and closely related to each other.

Ever since the English language firmly established its roots in the country, English plays have been written and enacted in India. A playwright shapes a story into a form that can be enacted. To make the performance theatrically active, this challenge is made possible through the playwright's imagination, actors and the dramatic technique. Girish Karnad has attempted to Indianize the form of drama by using some of the conventions of Indian classical drama and those of the folk theatre and by blending them in a singular style of his own. According to Karnad, a play realizes its full potential only through presentation on stage. The playwright states in an interview with Chaman Ahuja, "When a story excites me, I want to share that excitement with others. As I analyse the components of its fascination, the form of

the play gets shaped" (174). Karnad pays great attention to even the minor and subtle aspects of the plot. The plots of his plays are well-knit with one incident closely related to each other, as if influencing the next. Deft in the art of plot construction, he employs the devices of parallelism and contrast in his plots.

Yayati, Karnad's first play, is a reinterpretation of an old myth from the Indian epic Mahabharata. Through the character of the old king named Yayati, Karnad portrays the predicament of a modern man who inspite of having everything in life feels dissatisfied and discontented. Karnad's *Tughlaq* is a historical play that explores the character of a famous fourteenth century Sultan of Delhi – Mohammed-bin-Tughlaq. This play is considered to be the allegory of the Nehruvian era, and highlights the king's political aspirations and his failed realities. His vision and his great ideas all ended up in disillusionment. Karnad's *Hayavadana* is based on a theme drawn from *The Transposed Heads*, a 1940 novella by Thomas Mann, which is originally found in Somadeva's *Kathasaritsagara* (11 century). It deals with the archetypal theme of human ambitiousness and carries allegorical overtones. Somadeva states, "The *Kathasaritsagara* speaks of the world as a many-splendoured place, one in which humans and non-humans of various persuasions and motivations act and interact with varying degrees of success and failure" (2). Karnad's *Nāga-Mandala: Play with a Cobra* is a play based on two oral folk tales of Karnataka. These folk tales were narrated by older women of the family and were passed on from generation to generation. These tales also serve as a parallel system of communication among the women in the society. Karnad's play focuses on a woman's yearning for love which is not satiated by her husband but by a cobra who assumes the shape of her husband.

Karnad's *Talé-Daṇḍa* derives its story from the reform movement of 12th century, Bhakti movement and from the life of a Kannada saint Basavanna (1105 CE-1168 CE) who protested against the prevailing evils of caste hierarchy in

Karnataka. *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* is based on the life of the Indian ruler of Mysore, Tipu Sultan who was an efficient administrator and a staunch supporter of the cause of India's freedom during the British reign in the late eighteenth century. Karnad's Tipu Sultan is a warrior and a visionary, who by interpreting his dreams, wants to free India from the British domination. *Bali: The Sacrifice* dwells on the conflicting principles of violence and non-violence as they are propounded by different religions and their followers. Karnad has tried to expose the futility of age-old rituals and their hollowness in his play.

The monologue *Broken Images* by Karnad, takes up a debate on the politics of language in the Indian literary culture. It highlights the ongoing debate about the use of regional languages in Indian literature as compared to the use of the adopted language English. *Flowers*, also written as a monologue, return to the world of folktale, and is the first work in this genre to focus on two opposed worlds, one of forbidden desires and another of religious devotion. *Wedding Album* gives a humorous insight into India's traditions and culture and explores the traditional Indian wedding in a globalised and technologically advanced India. His latest play *Boiled beans on Toast: A Play*, focuses on the myth about the origin of the city Bangalore, according to which an 11th century king was saved by an old woman who offered him boiled beans. This king named the city 'Bendakalooru' – the place of boiled beans. The subject of the play is the growth of the city in the last two decades, and its changing landscape and human relations in the present-day scenario.

Karnad's work has been thoroughly studied, analysed, enacted and reviewed by different critics. They have focused on various aspects of his literary work, like the use of myth, violence, and portrayal of women, dramatic craftsmanship, Indian ethos, patriarchal power, caste system, social adjustments, and folk strategies,

political and historical contexts. Some of the major critical works on the related aspects of his plays are discussed here.

In the essay "Tying Beginnings to Ends", Sridhar Rajeswaram argues that the themes of Karnad's plays are chronologically linked. Rajeswaram avers, "The confused morality that marks the ending of *Yayati* reappears at the beginning of *Tughlaq* and continues throughout it" (134). At the end of *Tughlaq*, the desire for solace is left unanswered which is further linked up with the search for identity, and the split between the mind and the body of Padmini in *Hayavadana*. The conflict is again displayed in *Nāga-Mandala*. The disagreement between head and body is again being played in *Talé-Daṇḍa* (death by beheading). The critic states, "*The Fire and the Rain* however, leaves one with a feeling of distaste at the sacrifice of youth and gender that had to be made in the cause of the progress of power and position. This links the play to Karnad's dramatic beginnings – *Yayati* – in which the youth was subordinated to age and power" (140). This essay displays a circular trajectory of going back to the beginning and how the theme of Karnad's plays ties up the present with the past.

Sudha Shastri and Amith Kumar P.V.in their essay "Locating Bakhtinian Carnival in Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* and *Nāga-Mandala*" examine the common principles between the notion of carnival and folk theatre with reference to these plays. The critics state, " The notion of 'carnival' in Bakhtin's writing appears in a set of interspersed ideas that share certain common characteristics like subverting and discrowning an established hierarchy, celebrating the grotesque and the profane, and foregrounding a laughter that parodies authoritarian discourse by emphasising the comicality of the folklore and the bawdy body" (146). The essay explores the spirit of carnival as explicated by Bakhtin with a particular focus on the folk elements in Karnad's plays.

In "Effacing *Hayavadana*: On the Masks of the Text", N.P. Ashley draws attention to the dramatical devices used by Karnad, one of which is the use of masks. Ashley argues that masks diverts the viewer's attention from the most familiar and projected face of any event or emotion and change the approach to the text significantly. Ashley asserts, "The theatrical devices and their deployment change the approach to the text significantly. In this regard the use of mask is crucial" (175).

The critic P. Dhanavel in his article "*Hayavadana*: A Study in Condensation" asserts that the Freudian theory of condensation is a helpful tool to understand Karnad's complex dramatic craft. The use of the image of Ganesha, the character of *Hayavadana*, the theme of *Transposed heads*, structure, genre and condensation become an active principle and an essential aspect of Karnad's creative genius. The critic comments, "The play flows like an underground river that springs out in different directions yet remains a forceful and vigorous current reaching out to the sea of human experiences" (170).

Ram Sharma in his article, "Displaying the Theatrical effectiveness: (Re) Cording through Technique in Girish Karnad's *Tughlaq*" talks about the new look of the play that gave a desired effect on the stage. He states, "The technique of symbols, disguise, spectator, irony, poetic utterances, imagery, etc. are corded in one piece and being corded they have the strength to cord the head and heart of the spectators" (67).

Amrita Sengar in her article, "Indian Ethos and Dramatic Craftsmanship – A Fusion in Karnad's Plays" focuses on use of masks, curtains, *Sutradhar*, the seemingly unrelated comic episodes to uphold the rich cultural heritage of India. She states, "Karnad's uniqueness lies in the revival of the ritualistic and symbolic aspects of drama. Involved in role playing...dressing, singing and dancing –all are aspects of rituals" (118). The critic notes that Karnad has taken up historical facts in

Tughlaq, use of shape-shifting and folk tales in *Nāga-Mandala* and *Hayavadana* and social deformity in *Talé-Daṇḍa*, and the universal theme of love, hatred, alienation and jealousy in *The Fire and the Rain*.

Another article, "Girish Karnad: A Man and Artist – Evolution of his Dramatic Genius" by Krishna Singh highlights the achievements of Karnad as a dramatist and his contribution to Indian drama. He comments about Karnad's work, "Subjects from native soil, characters deeply rooted in indigenous culture, English very much Indianised to suit the context and create feel of Indianness, and folk and classical theatre traditions endorse his well- thought design to set free Indian English drama from the colonial yoke" (13). The critic asserts that Karnad endeavours to fight against the legacy of colonialism by supporting Indian values and the cultural ethos of India.

Deepak Dhillon in his study, "Influence of Brechtian Technique on Girish Karnad: A study on *Nāga-Mandala*"discusses Bertolt Brecht's'Alienation effect' used by Karnad in his play. The whole drama is enacted in folk theatre form with all the usual devices of magic and mime. The audience remains detached being reminded that they are only watching a play hence should think more rather than feel about all that is being presented on the stage. Dhillon states, "Karnad leaves the stage apparatus visible, presents synoptic announcements, and has narrator's directly talking to the audience" (17). The audience is compelled by the playwright to respond to the action of the play intellectually and to question it, instead of responding emotionally and merely enjoying it.

Critics Anupam Bansal and Satish Kumar in the article "Emancipating women: A note on women empowerment in *Nāga-Mandala*" depict how this drama upholds the traditional significance of the institution of marriage by exposing the evils of female exploitation in a male-dominated society. Rani's triumph in the snake ordeal and her elevation to the status of a goddess denotes woman

empowerment and unjust male domination. The critics comment, "Karnad exposes male chauvinism, the exploitation and operation of women and injustice done to them in patriarchal society" (158). Jasbir Jain in her article "*Flowers*: *A Dramatic Monologue*: Patriarchal Power and The Nature of Sacrifice" avers: "Karnad's choice of a priest as the narrative voice, the centrality of the temple as a place for his trial, the worship of the lingam – all represent the male principle" (347). She brings to light the hidden human desires through the character of the priest, who violates his religious duties and commits marital infidelity by getting involved with a courtesan.

In "Casteism and Karnad's *Hayavadana*", Kaustav Chakraborty comments, "Casteism is such an ideology that equates one's value as a human being with the social caste to which one belongs: the higher one's caste, the better one is assumed to be because quality is 'in the blood, that is inborn'" (175). He states that Karnad has illustrated how caste politics and power equations affect the friendship of the two male protagonists Devadatta and Kapila. In the article "Race and Gender in *Yayati*", B. Yadava Raju argues that Karnad highlights the issues of class/caste and gender which become complicated due to human desires. Raju avers, "Karnad emphasizes through the female characters, the patriarchal norms of the society that expects a woman to prove her innocence" (86). Karnad revives the age-old story by giving a new lease of life to it in his play.

Payel Sinha in her article "'Fire' and 'Rain' in *The Fire and the Rain*" highlights the fire of lust, passion, revenge, jealousy that consumes the three Brahmins of repute in the play. One character Aravasu, manages to douse the flames of revenge that burn within him and ends the cycle of vengeance. The critic states, "Love is the only redeeming force in life and ... the conflict within man is due to a ceaseless pursuit of his own obsessions" (239). Jyoti Dahiya in her article, "*Nāga-Mandala*: A Story of Marriage and Love" analyses the agony and anguish faced by both men and women in their adult roles and their social adjustment in a society

where the individual is given little space for self-development. The writer states, "Karnad uses the folk tale in its feminized form to present the problems faced by both man and woman in marriage and the process of transformation of the immature and emotionally under-developed person into a mature and fully grown adult" (4). The story has been projected through the female protagonist Rani's needs, problems and experiences within the patriarchal institution and her way of adjusting into those difficult roles.

M.R. Verma in his article "Girish Karnad's *Talé-Daṇḍa*: Presentness of the Past" argues that not only religion but also the caste system was threatening the fabric of Indian society. Verma comments, "Unless we are ready to rise above parochial religious and social considerations, we are doomed to suffer inhuman atrocities and bloodshed again and again" (181). In "Switching Heads and Cultures: Transformation of an Indian Myth by Thomas Mann and Girish Karnad", the author Anand Mahadevan analyse show a single myth written by the Brahmin Somadeva has been employed by the authors in different cultures since the eleventh century AD. He states, "Mann's treatment of the parable in turn inspired Girish Karnad, an Indian playwright, to bring the text back to India" (23).The myth has evolved from a Sanskrit parable to a German novella that in turn became the inspiration for a Kannada play in India by Karnad.

Julia Leslie in her research work, "Nailed to the Past: Girish Karnad's Plays" points out that Karnad gives as much weight to myth and history as he does to folk tales, for they too demand to be retold. Leslie on Karnad's *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* states, "he draws on the past –in this instance, on the public and private life of a famous historical figure -- to galvanize his contemporary Indian audience to look more closely at their own public and private worlds" (75). Karnad's dramaturgy strikes a balance between the pleasure experienced by reading his plays as well as by their enactment on the stage.

Raj Rekha Shukla in the article, "The interweaving of folk strategies in the plays of Karnad" discusses in brief how Karnad has employed the techniques of classical and folk theatre of India, like *Yakshagana, Sannata, Parijata* and *Doddata* puppets in his plays. The critic states, "Girish Karnad is a dramatist who has acknowledged the influence of the folk theatrical tradition of India in his various plays to make them relevant in the modern context" (182). He has used different techniques, facilitating a mixture of the human (like the *Sutradhar*) and the non-human (like puppets, masks etc.) to create a queer magical world. The plays show the absurdity of life with all its elemental passions and conflicts, and man's eternal struggle to achieve perfection.

"And why should I deserve that madness? The strange case of Karnadian *Tughlaq*" by Abhishek Jha highlights Karnad's Tughlaq as a figure that denies any kind of 'particularity' through his 'peculiarity'. The character of Tughlaq cannot be generalised or considered stereotypical since he expresses several eccentricities through his choices. This paper analyzes his activities and words, where the ambitious administrator seeks the meaning of his failure. The critic comments, "Tughlaq's madness is the result of personal and social alienation, existential crisis and self-estrangement" (204). His madness symbolises the gap between his ambition and his downfall.

Gaurishankar Jha in his article "Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana*: A Post-colonial Fruition" points out that *Hayavadana* is "a post-colonial offshoot of a matured post-colonial mind highlighting social and psychological problems, interrogating human ideas and ideals" (27). Focussing on its post-colonial origin, the critic observes that the play explores the questions of identity crisis, alienation and gender bias. According to M.K. Naik in "From the Horse's Mouth: A Study of *Hayavadana*" the idea behind the play is the ironic confrontation between opposites inhuman life. Karnad explores existential ideas like the problem of 'being' and the

metaphysical anguish of the human condition. According to Naik, "the play suggests a strategy for the achievement of integration in a world inevitably cursed with absurdity and irrationality" (140).

B.S. Naikar, the critic, in his article "*Tughlaq* as an experimenter" discusses the problems encountered by Tughlaq due to his inability to reconcile with the polarities of his own nature, one of the clever and ruthless administrator and the other of the sensitive philosopher and poet. Tughlaq, according to Naikar, is "an experimenter who is forced to revise his philosophy as a desperate measure to answer the demands of time" (90). Radhiga R. Priyadarshiniin her article "Girish Karnad's *Nāga-Mandala*: An Archetypal Perspective" discusses *Nāga-Mandala* from the point of view of Northop Frye's Archetypal theory, where a creative writer humanizes the natural world and naturalizes the human world. The critic states, "Girish Karnad does the both and ascertains that nature will interfere in the human world, if injustice is done to an innocent person" (164). In the play the natural and the human world complement each other.

In the article "Portraying the Inner Landscape: A Peep into the Characters of Girish Karnad's *Bali the Sacrifice*", Madhubala Saxena discusses the four major characters who personify human passions. The critic draws attention to the two 'orbs' in which the brighter one portrays love and compassion and the darker one portrays bloodshed, cruelty and violence. Saxena asserts, "Karnad has laid bare the inner psyche of these characters and they display the conflict – inner and outer – leading to the final conclusion" (125). Critics Jyoti Gupta and Sushma Sharma in their article "Existentialism in Girish Karnad's *Yayati*" discuss Karnad's use of a subplot from Mahabharata and its reinterpretation highlighting the theme of responsibility in his play. The critics comment, "The existential problem in Girish Karnad's plays and particularly in *Yayati* is so pervasive that it menaces to gnaw every sphere of life" (37).

In the article "Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana*: A Quest for Perfection or Satisfaction?"M. K. Rukhaya exemplifies how the notion of perfection is primarily rooted in satisfaction. She states, "Being complete/incomplete is only a matter of one's own perception; else, how can the animal-headed Ganesha be regarded supreme and the animal-headed Hayavadana deemed incomplete?" (95). The article also supports the theme of the play that is the superiority of the head to the body and Padmini's attempt to fuse the best of the two male protagonists. The critic also refers to Deborah Tannen's Genderlect Theory that draws attention to different ways of male and female communication.

Sudha Shashtri in the article "Subversion and Closure: Reading Micro-Texts in Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* and *Nāga-Mandala*" examines the role of the riddle and the oath in the two plays in building up the expectations of the reader and then subverting them. Shastri observes: "Apart from the use of folk theatrical devices, both plays also subvert patriarchal mores and project an empowered central female figure" (51). Shastri considers the riddle and the oath to be micro-genres that question patriarchal norms in the two plays and allow the female protagonist to express their suppressed desires.

Archana Rathore in her article "Vivifying the classical myths in Girish Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain*", discusses the several thematic threads which run parallel in Karnad's play. Karnad reworks a classical myth in the modern context and depicts conflicting human emotions through the characters. The critic draws attention to the fact that the title suggests both negative and positive human emotions. She states, "The fire symbolizes fire of revenge lust, anger, envy, treachery, violence and death. The rain on the other hand symbolizes self-sacrifice, compassion divine grace, forgiveness, revival and regeneration" (192). Gulshan Das and Tanjeem Ara Khan in "Intertextuality and Retelling of Myths in Girish Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain*" emphasize that the play in based on an episode from the

Mahabharata and that Karnad "reworks and builds castles out of the debris of what was once a social discourse and is still a reality" (198). The intertextual references in his play ensure that the plot and the characters are familiar to the audience.

Dolors Collellmir in his article, "Mythical Structure in Girish Karnad's *Nāga-Mandala*" discusses how the play is anchored in the ancient theory and tradition of Indian theatre. The play has triangular relationships and triple endings. It should not be studied only with reference to the Hindu philosophy or the conservative nature of Indian epics but also in the context of the aspiring Indian woman of today. The writer quotes the example of Satyadev Dubey who believes Karnad to be "the only playwright in the history of Indian theatre to have treated adultery as normal and treated adulterous women sympathetically" (358). Collellmir believes that Karnad can be seen as an author who presents the character of married woman from within an unconventional perspective.

In "Myth and Puranas: Decolonisation of Indian English Drama" Nagraj Holeyannavar has quoted many examples of post-colonial Indian dramatists who have used myth and *puranas* in their dramas. He states, "Indian English playwrights take the mythological elements in exhibiting their thoughts on the present condition with inner or external struggle of a human being" (1). Although modernity has dominated the literary scenes, Indians have not cast aside their culture and tradition. Indian drama is therefore typically Indian and is deeply rooted in mythical stories and *puranas*. Socio-cultural patterns of the society are expressed through myths which when utilised in literature indirectly convey the prevalent attitudes and culture of a society. The study of myth is in a way a study of individuals that are a part of the society. Mythical plots carry contemporary relevance and enrich the meaning of a given artistic work.

G.A. Ghanshyam in his article, "Myths and Legends in the Plays of Girish Karnad" points out that Indian playwrights makes extensive use of tradition, myths,

legends and folklore in Indian drama in English. Ghanshyam states, "Myths, legends and folklore are in fact the embodiments of these cultural ethos that represent the underlying values and principles of life, the shared experience of the race, the rules and codes of society" (328). Karnad provides the reader with a glimpse of the past as well as its relevance to an understanding of the contemporary world by weaving tales which reflect the rich cultural traditions of India. Seema Suneel in "Girish Karnad's *Yayati* reconsidered" observes that *Yayati* is an ancient story of an avaricious king, who longs for eternal youth and decides to borrow it from his own son. This traditional tale was given a new meaning and significance highly relevant in the context of life today. The critic states, "In the *Mahabharata*, Yayati recognizes the nature of desire itself and realizes that fulfilment does not diminish or finish desire. In Karnad's play, however, Yayati recognizes the horror of his own life and assumes his moral responsibility after a series of symbolic encounters" (126). In his play, Karnad has pioneered a style which unites the elements of traditional Indian theatre, such as '*Yakshagana*' and strikingly modern sensibility in the context of contemporary socio-political realities.

The critic Rajendraprasad Y. Shinde in his article "*Tughlaq*: A Contemporary Political Play by Girish Karnad" discusses the political and historical context of Karnad's play. Shinde comments that Tughlaq is relevant to the modern world and is "Contemporary in the sense that one can see flashes of Tughlaqi attitude – callous yet well-meaning in contemporary political structures too" (51). The play dramatically highlights the importance of credibility and authenticity for an administrator. Tasleem A. War in her study "Retrieval of Indian Culture and Tradition in Girish Karnad's Plays" draws attention to the unprecedented change in the social and cultural ethos of India resulting from its colonised past. It not only affected the economic scenario but also the traditional arts and crafts. It was then that writers like Karnad made an attempt to bring 'cultural Renaissance' in the Indian literary scene. She states, "During his formative years, Karnad went through

diverse influences that went long way into shaping his dramatic taste and genius. One of the influences on him was that he was exposed to a literary scene where there was a direct clash between western and native traditions" (1). This paper highlights Karnad's significant contribution to Indian English drama through his attempt to retrieve the tradition, culture and mythology of the rich Indian past.

In Ashis Sengupta's "Being and Role-playing: Reading Girish Karnad's *Tughlaq*" Karnad's fictional character Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq evokes not one but several political figures of colonial and post-colonial India by embodying their radically different impulses. Sengupta states, "He is at once the Gandhi experimenting with truth, the Nehru aiming at cultural modernity and the Indira choosing self-destructive authoritarianism for her concept of national well being" (170). According to Sengupta, Karnad's historical fiction is not merely allegorical but portrays history in the modern perspective. Karnad's *Tughlaq* lends contemporary relevance to the multiple political figures that have dominated the Indian political scene.

P.H. Sethumadhava Rao in his article, "New Directions in Girish Karnad's Plays" focuses on Karnad's style of writing in his works. He notes that Karnad has moved away from the regionalist tradition by contextualising three of his popular plays, *Tughlaq*, *Yayati* and *Hayavadana*, that had given Kannada literature its identity in the mid-twentieth century. Rao states, "None of his three plays has a specifically Kannada theme. *Yayati* reinterprets an ancient myth. *Tughlaq* is based on history and the plot of *Hayavadana* comes from Kathasaritsagar in Sanskrit. Karnad's plays have new directions as compared to other playwrights in Kannada literature" (103). He has tried to bring into his play first-hand knowledge of the practical demands of the stage and a better understanding of dramatic style and technique.

Jaganmohana Chari in his research paper, "Karnad's *Hayavadana* and *Nāga-mandala*: A Study in Post-colonial Dialectics", discusses through these two plays the dilemma of the middle class, to which he also belongs, overwhelmed by British influences during India's colonial past. Chari connects colonial domination with patriarchal attitudes and states, "The post-colonial matrix embedded in the play opens up yet another space for the working out of the theme of patriarchal oppression" (182). The dissatisfaction that the middle class felt is expressed through the theme of these two plays.

A review of the major critical studies of Karnad's plays reveals multiple aspects of his work that reflect his versatile talent and the complex nature of his ideas. However, the dramatic technique needs to be explored further in depth as it forms an important component of all his plays.

It was widely believed that drama started much later in Asia than in Europe and the West, but this was not the case. In fact, drama started in India before 200 BC since the first treatise on the Performing Arts, the *Nātyaśāstra* was written in India around this time by Sage Bharata in around 200 BC. Like Aristotle's *Poetics*, which was written in about 335 BC and included detailed writings on dramatic theory, Sage Bharata's *Nātyaśāstra* is an elaborate work exploring dramaturgical principles. However, unlike Aristotle's *Poetics*, it is a detailed study which explores different dimensions of stagecraft primarily stage design, music, dance, make-up and many other theatrical aspects. While Aristotle's *Poetics* is essentially formal and didactic in its form, the *Nātyaśāstra* outlines the principles of the performing arts in the form of a dialogue between Bharata and several *munis* or holy men. Indian drama is thus one of the oldest dramatic forms in the world and certainly equivalent to Ancient Greek drama in its richness and diversity.

Ancient Indian drama includes both written dramas and dramas which were handed over from generation to generation through oral performances. The Indian dramatic traditions drew significantly from the *Nātyaśāstra* and both written and oral verse dramas and dance dramas were developed and passed on. Many of the plots and stories used for these plays came from the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata Purana although local tales, characters and fables were also used.

The *Nātyaśāstra* has made a strong imprint on Indian drama and the performing arts of southern Asia for many centuries since it was written. It lead to the development of varied forms of Indian Drama such as Sanskrit drama which developed around 100 AD and the dance drama and drama forms developed in the Brihadessi around 600AD. Some early playwrights of Indian Drama include Bhasa whose most well-known play is the political romance entitled 'The Vision of Vasavadatta'. Some other interesting Sanskrit plays were written by the poet-king Sudraka including a play titled 'The Little Clay Cart'. Visakhadatta wrote a longer play 'The Minister's Seal'. The influence of *Nātyaśāstra* is evident in these plays. The theories and forms described in the *Nātyaśāstra* also impact modern Indian drama, dance and cinematic forms and it is believed that these principles strengthen most modern Indian plays, dance dramas, dance forms, films and television.

Indian drama has a long recorded history and texts written in the ancient times have survived either in the original language or as translation in more contemporary languages. Writers and playwrights allude to these texts while composing their own creative works. These ancient texts are quite complex and reflect detailed research and study of the subjects that they explore. It deals. According to the Indian view of life, the purpose of drama and theatre was to create a feeling of pleasure or bliss (Rasa) by delineating different situations, mental states and emotions of human beings. Before the human beings developed the ability to read or write, stories were passed on from generation to generation either orally or through enactment. The eminence of *Nātyaśāstra* is not that it was the first book on the subject but that it was the first comprehensive treatise on dance, drama and music. It was described as

the fifth Veda accessible to all the castes of society. It is believed that it was Lord Brahma who extracted the main ideas from the four Vedas and created the *Nātyaśāstra* out of it; it was Sage Bharata who then put it into practice; and it was Lord Shiva and his better half, Goddess Parvati, who contributed the Tandava and the Lasya dances in the treatise.

Thirty-six chapters of Bharata's *Nātyaśāstra* have been translated by Adya Rangacharya into English and compiled as a volume. Due to the complexity of ideas and syntax, each and every verse of the original *Nātyaśāstra* has not been translated. *Nātyaśāstra* is considered as a Shastra on dramaturgy. Bharat states about drama: "It brings rest and peace to persons afflicted by sorrow or fatigue or grief or helplessness. There is no art, no knowledge, no yoga, no action that is not found in Natya" (Rangacharya 4). Another work called *Dasarupaka*, written during the tenth century, mentions Bharata as a muni (sage) who produced the first play based on God Brahma's *Natyaveda*.

The essential elements of stage-craft were described by the *Nātyaśāstra* thousands of years ago. In the later chapters there is an elaborate description of the construction of theatre, its walls and its roof. During ancient times, there were open auditoria with beasts intruding during performances. There are still many such open theatres in villages.

The Nātyaśāstra narrates the origin of *Nātya* and how and why Bharata produced the first play. It describes the *Natyagraha* – with the details of *Natyamandapa*, the beginning of *Nātya* performance i.e. the different shapes of the stage: the oblong (biggest), the square (middle) and the triangle (small). Chapter III points out that a play should begin with the worship of the stage and of the Gods as an auspicious opening. It includes invoking gods and goddesses like Shiva, Vishnu, Saraswati and many more. The prayers and the lighting of the lamp are followed by

the installation of deities, their worshipping and further illumination of the stage. Bharata discusses a dance form, *Tandava-nritya*, and gives details of *Amrit-Manthana* by Lord Shiva to please the Gods. There are some pre-enactment performances on the stage called *Purvaranga* for *Rasa* (Esthetics) and *Bhava* (Emotions). The study further elaborates the details of *Abhinaya* (acting) with its sub-varieties. Its four kinds are physical gestures, verbal elements, emotional expressions and costumes. The study further analyses the use of hands and major limbs and the types of movement of the feet and hands and other related physical gestures for particular and selected roles; for example, there is an account of the body used in fighting and duels in circular movements. The *Gati* (stage walk) of the characters in the play and the description of their entry and exit from the stage is accompanied by different musical instruments and chorus. The treatise thus elaborates on the use of physical gestures, speech for communication, use of sound, rhythmic meters, words, metrical patterns with multiple syllables and poetic concepts in Indian drama.

Bharata further discusses the intonation of four kinds of dramatic languages. The first is intended for Gods, the second for kings, the third and the fourth for rustics, animals and lesser beings. The use of different dialects and modes of addressing the characters is described in great detail. Chapter XX explains the ten types of plays, their forms and their production. Chapter XXI presents details on the plot. Bharata explains that plot is of two types: *Adhikarika* (principal plot) because it is mainly concerned with the hero, and *Prasangika* (subsidiary, incidental), both contributing to the final result of the play. It consists of five *avasthā-s* (stages): the early beginning (*Prārambha*), the effort (*Prayatna*), possibility of achievement (*Prāpti-sambhava*), certainty of achievement (*Niyatāpti*) and achievement (*Phala-prāpti*). There are five stages (*Artha-prakrtis*) in the development of the plot, viz., Seed (*Bija*, small measure of plot ending in fruit), Drop (*Bindu*, missing purpose that keeps the continuity of the play), Incident (*pataka*, principal happening or incident),

Episode (*Prakari*, which has no continuity of its own but the result of which serves the purpose of the principal plot) and Action (*Karya*, it finally achieves the goal of the principal plot). There are five joinings (*sandhis*) that knit the principal plot to its subsidiaries and there are five structural devices to develop a plot and construct a play.

Nātyaśāstra defines the types of play from the director's point of view, for example, some with dance and costumes, some with fights, some dealing with emotions and some depending on dialogues. It guides the playwright as how to construct the beginning of a play. It explains how to establish the identity of a character using garlands, costume, make-up and accessories. The text also narrates different forms of verbal representations, characters of women based on their behaviour, signs of love, eight kinds of heroines, rules for men, secret lovers and emotions like jealousy and fear. The outward characterization of men and women and their nature, qualities and activities are explained. Chapter XXVI is about miscellaneous moods indicating pleasantness (happiness) or unpleasantness (harshness) through expressions and gestures. They could be called 'expressions of miscellaneous ideas or things' – *Citrābhinaya*. It also talks about certain stage conventions regarding dialogue delivery like:-

Ākāsabhāsita: A person looking up at the sky and speaking where he is supposed to talk to a person far away.

Ātmagata: This is when a character speaks out due to extreme joy, fear, passion, madness and other intense feelings that are in his or her mind.

Apavārita: Something that is to be concealed from other characters.

Janāntika: When characters whisper into the ear so that others may not be able to hear them.

The last chapters of the text describe aspects related to the production of the play which contribute to its success. Bharata explains the various male and female

characters: *Uttama* (superior, Gods, kings, Brahmins), *Adhama* (inferior) and *Madyama* (middling) and how the distribution of roles should take into consideration the personalities and physique of the actors.

After Bharat's *Nātyaśāstra*, the second important work that stands as a landmark in the field of Sanskrit dramaturgy is the *Dasarupaka* of Dhananjaya. On account of its concise nature the latter work is often referred to and followed by most of the critics – Indian as well as Western. Dhananjaya has claimed that he has abridged and presented in concise form the principles of dramaturgy as propounded by Bharata in his *Nātyaśāstra*. Between the period of Bharata and Dhananjaya, if there had been written any work on the dramaturgy, no records of the same exist at present. However according to Girish Karnad, the *Nātyaśāstra* in India has received widespread acceptance since it encompasses the basic philosophy underlying all the performing arts of India. He states, "The *Natya Sastra* plays the same role in this school of aesthetics that the Vedas play in the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy. It is the principle of their acceptance, rather than their actual content, which is of the essence" ("Theatre in India" 338).

Although a lot of research has been done on various critical aspects of Karnad's plays, all these studies focus mostly on the thematic strands, characterization, plot structure, use of myths in his plays etc. Karnad's dramatic technique, despite forming an important component of his plays, still remains an unexplored enigma. The main aim of this study is to examine and evaluate the major plays of Karnad with a focus on the dramatic technique. The study also examines Karnad's views about technique to draw an overview of his dramatic style and elements in order to contribute to the research on the eminent playwright's oeuvre. Different dramatic techniques employed by Karnad in his major plays are analysed in depth in the thesis to study how the techniques work with the themes and complement them.

Drama is written to be performed rather than to be read. Hence the dramatist employs dramatic devices or techniques suitable for the stage while also using literary devices that are available for novelists. Girish Karnad has been able to bring in many levels of meaning into his plays through the dramatic devices that he has adopted. This thesis argues that dramatic technique employed by Karnad has provided him tools to develop ideas, characters and plots, thus adding another dimension to his plays. Through an amalgamation of ancient Indian beliefs and contemporary issues Karnad has attempted to bring to the surface the psychological conflicts as experienced by individuals in challenging circumstances. Karnad tries to capture the modern anxieties and dilemmas by reworking ancient Indian tales in the form of plays. The varied dramatic techniques that Karnad uses contribute to the artistic commingling of the Indian sensibility with the western dramatic tradition in his plays. As a modern playwright, Karnad is always engaged in the act of 'deconstructing myths'. Karnad admits: "The myth had enabled me to articulate to myself a set of values that I had been unable to arrive at rationally" (Karnad *Three plays* 3). He takes up mythical and legendary tales from Indian culture and presents them in the modern context.

The present study uses the formalistic approach to examine the major plays of Girish Karnad. Through a close reading of the texts the significant dramatic techniques employed by Karnad are studied and analysed with a focus on how they contribute to the meaning and the dramatic effect of the plays. Taking the written text as the primary source for research, the present study looks at Karnad use of dramatic technique as a tool to explore complex theoretical and philosophical issues.

Karnad's plays are appreciated for their absorbing tales, intricate plot structures, logical dialogues, an impressive spectacle, the beginning, the middle and the neatly tied up conclusion. He is faithful to the sources in presenting characters and episodes. There may be anachronisms and deviations at times as a reflection of

poetic licence. However he takes care to conform to the spirit of the subject while the treatment of the theme is in keeping with his own ideas and world-view.

The second chapter titled 'Vivifying History, Myth and Folklore' examines Karnad's three initial plays – *Nāga-Mandala, Tughlaq* and *Hayavadana,* with a focus on the dramatic technique employed by Karnad in these plays. Techniques like Dramatic Irony, Speech Devices, Symbolism and Masks form important aspects in these plays. Each of these enhances the meaning and effectiveness of the plays and creates a lasting impact on the minds of the audience/readers.

The third chapter 'Dramatizing Spectacle and Action' focuses on Karnad's major three plays – *Yayati, Talé-Daṇḍa, The Fire and the Rain* anddeals with techniques like Plot and Subplot, Costumes, Stage combat and Lighting to address contemporary issues and anxieties. Karnad's plays are designed to be performed on the stage, with detailed directions to guide the director and the actors. At another level, the element of performance is highlighted, as spectacle and drama dominates most of the scenes. The plot and the sub-plot, stage combat, costumes and lighting – each of them draws attention to the play as performance.

In the fourth chapter 'Enhancing the Visual and Aural Elements,' the focus is on Karnad's *Bali: The Sacrifice, The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* and his monologues – *Flowers* and *Broken Images.* The techniques prominently used in these plays are Imagery, Props, Music and Sounds. This chapter concentrates on Karnad's handling of social issues by synthesising the past with the present, with a focus on the dramatic elements used.

In the fifth chapter 'Towards a Modernist Poetics' a general overview of major plays of Karnad with respect to folk forms, myths and innovations for the modern theatre has been taken up.

In the last chapter, Conclusion, an attempt has been made to summarize the basic findings of the thesis. On the basis of the study of his dramatic technique, Karnad's position in the mainstream of important Indian playwrights of the contemporary times has been discussed.

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Chapter Two

Vivifying History, Myth and Folklore

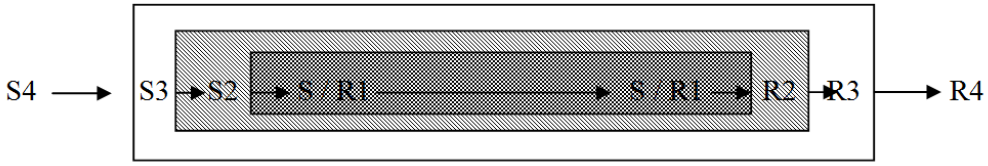
Drama is an ancient Greek word signifying actions and deeds. Credit for the initiation of drama and establishing rules for its enactment on stage goes to the ancient Greeks. As time progressed drama and theatre changed with the new demands of the civilization. New storylines, new ideas and new ways of handling it were discovered with the passage of time. Being an integral part of culture and emerging out of religious and mythical convictions, drama became a new genre. The contemporary social, political and philosophical ideas were reflected in the drama of Greece, England, Italy and India – countries that had had a long history of artistic and cultural practices.

For the audience to understand drama better or effectively, various dramatic techniques have been used over a period of time. Almost each play differs from the other either in concept or presentation but most plays follow similar dramatic conventions or rules for their enactment on the stage. Varied dramatic techniques have been applied and utilized by the dramatist on the stage to achieve and present the required perspective. These techniques often present the current social situations and also help to understand the playwright's perspective about current political and philosophical debates. There have been many dramatists since the inception of drama but the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle's *Poetics*, written in 335 BC, is considered to be the most comprehensive theoretical study of drama. The discussion and analysis of drama in the *Poetics* has been accepted as the benchmark in the history of literature. Aristotle has praised Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* as the apotheosis of the tragic play, and has called it the greatest Athenian tragedy. S.H. Butcher states, "On the other hand, there are many indications in the *Poetics* that the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles is Aristotle's ideal play" (320). In Sophocles' play the unity between the imagery and the plot, the juxtaposition of personal and political life of the protagonist and the dramatic irony which creates new tension in the story makes the play effective.

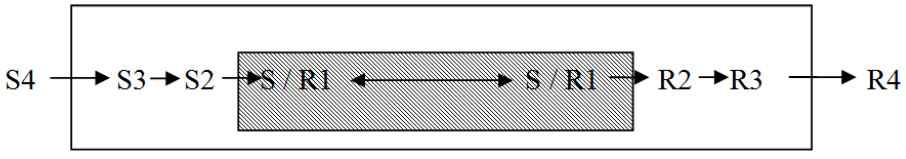
Greek drama has had a major influence on the world of theatre. Two basic principles that signified Greek dramatic techniques were, firstly, that acts of violence were never committed in view of the audience, and secondly, it never used more than three actors and therefore the stage artists had to perform double roles. In Oedipus' discovery of Jocasta's body at the end of the play, and his act of blinding himself in *Oedipus Rex* is only narrated to the audience and not enacted on the stage.

Manfred Pfister presents in *The Theory and Analysis of Drama* (1991) a detailed version of dramatic structures and textualization of drama. He offers a comprehensive framework for the analysis of plays in dramatic and theatrical contexts. Pfister examines plays beginning from Greek tragedy and comedy to the contemporary theatre using the communication theory and the structuralist analysis of drama as performance. He explains how dramatic texts can be distinguished from epics or narrated texts. Taking several examples from plays and their characters, he draws attention to the fact that it is not the author who speaks but the fictional character created by him that presents his perspective. Pfister proposes a model that classifies the sender and receiver positions according to the various semiotic levels of dialogues.

Pfister has presented two models, one for narrative and another one for drama, as illustrated in the figures given below:



Communication Model for Narrative



Communication Model for Drama

These models classify the positions of the sender and the receiver according to the ontological plane on which the communication takes place. In the above model, S4 stands for the actual author in the society as the producer of that work, and S3 for the 'ideal' author. He is the textually implied author of the text or the whole work. S2 stands for the fictional narrator and his role in the narrative medium. S/R1 represents fictional characters within the world of the text who communicate with each other through dialogues as speakers or receivers. R2 is the fictional addressee of S2, R3 is the implied ideal receiver of the whole work and R4 is for the actual reader, including those living later. In case, there is no character as a fictional narrator or a fictional receiver in the play or in the narrative, the positions of S2 and R2 can be occupied by fully independent characters.

In plays, where the characters occupy the centre-stage, and there is no interlocutor, S2 and R2, that is, the fictional narrator and the fictional addressee do not exist. The darkest shaded area, that is Level 1, represents the internal communication system between the characters. The light-coloured area, that is Level 2, represents the mediating communication system between the fictional character and the addressee. Level 3 and 4, the superimposed area, offer the 'external communication system' in idealized form and real form respectively. Pfister highlights the difference between narrative and drama in his comment: "in dramatic texts, positions S2 and R2 are left vacant, thereby eliminating the mediating communication system. This 'loss' of communicative potential in comparison to narrative texts is compensated for in two ways, however. First, dramatic texts have access to non-verbal codes and channels...and secondly, aspects of the narrative function may be transferred to the internal communication system..." (Pfister 4). Pfister thus draws attention to the significance of physical gestures and the element of 'drama' in the play, which acts a medium of conveying emotions and attitudes of the characters, and supplements the spoken dialogues. The narrative and the dramatic communication model reveal a similarity in the expression of the inner

world of the characters, which may be represented through descriptions in the narrative, or through a symbolic portrayal in drama.

The various levels of narration and narrators can be studied specially with reference to Karnad's plays wherein there are several ontological planes, each encroaching upon the other. Characters in his plays are perceptive thinking beings, and their sub-conscious mind is revealed to the spectators through their soliloquies and monologues. Apart from these, other inanimate or subsidiary characters discuss the actions of the protagonists and comment upon them – their speech is audible only to the audience and not to the principal characters of the play. Also, the *Sutradhar* who introduces the plot and the characters in the beginning – in other words, the omniscient fictional narrator, has an insight into the minds, thoughts and actions of all the characters being portrayed in the play, and discusses each or many of them in the course of the play. In *Hayavadana*, for example, the *Sutradhar* called Bhagvata, figures also as a character in the plot of the play, and enters and exits the ontological world of the other characters according to his will. In this way, Karnad's plays bring in several levels of narration, thereby creating a tautness in the plot structure and action of the play.

Girish Karnad's use of folk elements is one of the striking characteristics of his plays. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, commenting on the dramatic technique of Karnad in *Tughlaq* (1964), *Hayavadana* (1971) and *Nāga-Mandala* (1988) states: "In all his three plays – be the theme historical, mythical or legendary, Karnad's approach is 'modern', and he deploys the conventions and motifs of folk art like masks and curtains to project a world of intensities, uncertainties and unpredictable denouement" (735). The Kannada folk tales and local theatre like *Yakshagana* combined with Karnad's artistic hue gives an extraordinary blend to his drama. Karnad uses folk elements like masks, mime, songs, dances, curtains, the commentator-narrator, the actor-manager, puppets, dolls, horse-man, the story-

within-a-story, the prologue, an epilogue and monologues according to the requirement of the plot in his plays. There is a marginal gap between the human and the non-human in the plays, to create a queer magical world. Most of his plays present the absurdity of life with all its elemental passions and conflicts, and man's eternal struggle to achieve perfection. Although Karnad's drama is inspired by Brechtian dramaturgy, he has moulded it skilfully in the Indian context. There is a blend of history, folklore, myth and contemporaneity in *Tughlaq*, *Hayavadana* and *Nāga-Mandala*.

Tughlaq is a political allegory. It is based on the life of the fourteen century sultan king Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq who was a turbulent ruler and ruled a major part of India in the fourteenth century. Although *Tughlaq* is a historical play, it has a universal theme and touches upon the contemporary politics of any era. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq desires to be a great king but there is a gap between his deeds and dreams that cannot be bridged. U.R. Ananthamurthy comments in his introduction to the play *Tughlaq*: "Both Tughlaq and his enemies initially appear to be idealists; yet, in the pursuit of the ideal, they perpetrate its opposite. The whole play is structured on these opposites: the ideal and the real; the divine aspiration and the deft intrigue" (ix). Karnad's *Tughlaq* explores a series of events that dramatize the failure of an idealistic but egocentric ruler. Tughlaq was a man with an inquisitive mind, liberal thoughts and scientific temper, but he was not an able administrator. His personal inability and administrative incapacity led to a state of anarchy and his province became a city of deaths during his reign. The play focuses on this contradiction and explores whether Tughlaq was a genius or a fool.

In the beginning of the play, Tughlaq is portrayed as a strict ruler who wants to unify the country by keeping religion out of politics. He implements reformist ideas – like exemption of the Jazia Tax on Hindus to win their trust. He decides to shift the capital of his kingdom from Delhi to Daulatabad, which is not only the

centre of his province but also a Hindu-dominated city. The political twists and turns in the play slowly reveal how religion can be misused to tempt the common man into foul play. The decision resulted in murders and deaths in Tughlaq's reign. The two characters – Aziz and Azam, represent a section of people who are clever enough to identify and misuse the loopholes in every law and know very well how to exploit the situation for personal gain. Tughlaq's administrative policies result in utter chaos and misery in the kingdom. In the end he is left alone, abandoned by those whom he trusted.

Hayavadana is one of Karnad's great works. The plot of this play has been taken from *Kathasaritsagara*, an ancient Sanskrit compilation of stories. The story of Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini is based on a tale from the *Vetal Panchavimsati* and Thomas Mann's *Transposed Heads*. The play depicts the crisis of human identity in a world of tangled relationships.

The protagonists Devadatta and Kapila are introduced in the beginning of the play. They are close friends with one mind, one heart, and are deeply attached to each other. Devadatta is a man of intellect whereas Kapila is characterised by his physical strength. Devadatta marries Padmini but she is already attracted towards Kapila and develops a soft corner for him after marriage. Her attitude reflects her desire for the best qualities of both the men – the intellect of Devadatta and the physical prowess of Kapila. Devadatta senses the growing bond between his wife and his best friend. This leads to a duel and the friends behead themselves at the temple of Goddess Kali. Desperate to bring them back to life, Padmini transposes their heads, to get the man of her desire by fusing the head of Devadutta with Kapila's body and vice versa. This transposition of head leads to a confusion of identities thereby highlighting the ambiguous nature of the human personality. Initially both the bodies behave in the way Padmini wishes but eventually start changing to their former selves. Devadatta gives up his literary interests and stops

writing poetry whereas Kapila loses his physical vigour and makes no efforts to regain it. Kapila's mind in Devadatta's body is haunted by the memories of Padmini. Padmini, after the exchange of heads, slowly starts feeling disappointed as both the men begin losing the traits she had originally been attracted to. A sword fight between Kapila and Devadatta leaves both the friends dead. Padmini performs *sati*, sacrificing herself on her husband Devadatta's pyre, thus bringing the story to an end.

Karnad uses the subplot of Hayavadana, the horse-man who is in search of a complete identity, either of a horse or of a man. It deepens the significance of the main theme of incompleteness by bringing in another perspective. Probably, to make this point Karnad names the play '*Hayavadana*', human's search for completeness. The horse-man's quest ends comically, with his becoming a complete horse. The critic Kirtinath Kurtkoti, in the introduction to the play, comments on Hayavadana's transformation into a horse and states: "The animal body triumphs over what is considered, the best in man, the *Uttamanga*, the human head!" (*Hayavadana* viii). The horse's mind and head thus wins over the human body.

Karnad's play *Nāga-Mandala* reflects the conventional patriarchal society and the subjugation of women in such a society. *Nāga-Mandala* is the story of a young girl, Rani, newly married to Appanna. This story is presented in the play by a woman narrator, a 'flame' in the temple that has come to tell a story. The play begins in the temple located on the outskirts of a village, where a passer-by stops at night for shelter. He then finds that many tiny 'flames' have come from different households of the village to the temple. Each flame is a female story-teller, sharing with the others her observations and new experiences. The stranger, a writer himself, joins them in their conversation, and listens to a 'new' tale that has just escaped from an old woman's head.

The flame narrates the story of Rani, who is neglected by her unfaithful and indifferent husband Appanna. The young girl misses her parents, feels home-sick and lonely, while Appanna comes home only in the day, asks for food, stays for some time and then goes away. He visits his concubine every night while his wife pines for him at home. This experience is painful for the newly-wed Rani, who is still very attached to her parents. Appanna treats Rani with contempt, aggression and mistrust. He locks her in the room, and scolds the old lady Kurudava and her son Kappanna when they attempt to become friendly with Rani. In her isolation Rani begins to build an imaginary world – a world of stories around her. Rani, like a typical wife wants to win her husband's affection at any cost. In an attempt to do so, she decides to drug her husband with a love root, given by the old lady Kurudava. She mixes the love root in the curry but the curry turns red and she spills it on the nearby anthill. Naga, the King Cobra, who lives in the anthill, drinks it. Naga is enchanted with Rani as an effect of the love potion, and begins to visit her every night assuming the appearance of her husband. This changes Rani's life completely as she starts to experience the love of a man though she is unaware of the fact that that the person with her is not her husband but the Naga.

When Rani breaks the news of her pregnancy to Appanna, he is shocked at this development and takes his wife to a public trial accusing her of adultery. The issue is brought to the notice of the *panchayat* or the village council where she is asked to prove her fidelity by putting her hand in the snake burrow and taking a vow that she has not committed adultery. This is based on the superstition that if any person tells a lie holding a snake in his/her hand, he/she will be instantly killed by the Snake God.

Rani does place her hand in the snake burrow and vows that she has never touched any male other than her husband and the male snake in the burrow. Rani's oath is both true and false at same time, but saves her from being penalised for her

infidelity. When Rani states that she has not touched any man in her life except her husband Appanna and the male cobra, little does she know that the loving husband with whom she spents her nights was the same male cobra in the burrow who had assume the appearance of Appanna. Rani's act of touching Naga to prove her chastity thus does not harm her since the expression 'touch' also encompasses her sexual relationship with the cobra. To the villagers and to Appanna her vow is correct on the face of it because they are not aware of Naga's magical powers. Hence, Rani is proved to be innocent and she comes out safely from the trial. She is declared chaste by the village *panchayat*. Later, Appanna accepts Rani and starts a new life together.

Karnad gives a binary ending to his play i.e. one where the snake is killed by the villagers and the other where Rani after realizing the truth, helps the Naga to live in her hair thereafter. This choice of a happy and a tragic ending to the play allows the readers to select and enjoy the ending that they like. Tuta Eswar Rao states, "Though the ending of *Nāga-Mandala* is not within the orthodoxy of Indian epic texts, the play must be studied and interpreted not only by keeping elements of Hindu philosophy as points of reference, but also by taking into account the cultural context of the Indian women of today who seeks to fulfil her needs and aspirations" (86).

Post-colonial Indian theatre of the late twentieth century explores the history and myths of the past and the cultural-political aspects of the subjects in the plays. Aparna Dharwadker states, "*Tughlaq* (1964) deals with the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the fourteenth-century Islamic sultan of Delhi whose efforts to rule a majority Hindu population with humanity and justice ended in chaos and violence." She observes that "for the first active decade in Indian drama after independence, the major new playwrights seem concerned principally with establishing and debating the relation of the new nation's present to its remote past through the narratives of

both myth and history" (166). The plays *Hayavadana* and *Nāga-Mandala* are originally based on myth and folktales but offer unconventional endings, which force the readers to contemplate on the issues raised in the plays. Since they do not offer an emotional ending, this discourages audience's empathy with the female protagonists Padmini and Rani. The influence of Brecht is evident here, and Bentley quotes Brecht's statement, "I do not like plays to contain pathetic overtones, they must be convincing like court pleas. The main thing is to teach the spectator to reach a verdict" (46). In both the plays – *Nāga-Mandala* and *Hayavadana,* the ending is very significant and contributes to the themes explored in the plays.

Karnad's work has the tone and expression of great drama. He has the outstanding ability to transform any situation into an aesthetic experience. Karnad uses the conventions and motifs of folk theatre – masks, curtain, dolls, and the story-within-a-story-to create a bizarre world. The influence of western dramatic techniques is apparent on Karnad's plays but the playwright uses them with subtlety and as per his own needs and requirements.

Dramatic irony, speech devices, symbolism and masks are some of the major techniques applied by Karnad in these three plays thus vivifying the use of history, myth and folklore in the plots of his plays.

Several instances of **Dramatic Irony**, that have a great influence on the audience, can be identified in different dramatic situations in Karnad's plays. M.H. Abrams defines dramatic irony in the *Glossary of Literary Terms* as, "a special kind of suspenseful expectation, when the audience or readers foresee the oncoming disaster or triumph but the character does not" (225). This dramatic technique was employed and popularized by Shakespeare to heighten the theme of his plays. Disguise, deception, and mistaken identity are presented in such a way that they are known to the audience, but not to the characters themselves. So, with the use of dramatic irony, the dramatist places the readers at a privileged position by allowing

them to know the hidden truth. It underlines the script's theme and unfolds layers of meaning by enhancing the emotional, aural, visual and intellectual experience of the audience.

Karnad's *Nāga-Mandala* uses dramatic irony to engage the interest of the audience. Here the audience knows that Rani is talking to a snake, Naga, who has assumed the form of her husband but she is oblivious to this fact. Rani compares Appanna to a snake while conversing with Naga and tells him, "You talk so nicely at night. But during the day I only have to open my mouth and you hiss – like a stupid snake," and Naga responds to it with a laugh (*Collected Plays I:* 271). This conversation clearly indicates that Rani believes the snake to be her husband Appanna, whereas the audience knows the truth about his identity. This use of dramatic irony revitalizes the reverberations of thematic complexity. Dramatic irony creates an interest on the part of the audience because they enjoy being included in the inner circle. This in turn means that the authors respect the spectators, their feelings, and their intelligence. Rani cannot comprehend the reason for her rejection by her husband Appanna but the audience knows about his relationship with the concubine. To ignite the feeling of love in her husband's heart, Rani crushes the root given by Kurudavva into a paste. But she gets scared when it changes into blood-red colour and pours it into the anthill near her house. This is licked by the cobra who thenceforward assumes Appanna's shape every night, whom she makes love to. The audience shares a secret with the dramatist which the character is ignorant of, thus depicting the use of dramatic irony.

In Karnad's *Hayavadana*, the audience knows that Kapila visited Padmini for his friend Devdatta's proposal to marry her but Kapila himself was charmed by her beauty in the first meeting. This is revealed when he reports to Devadatta, "She is Yakshini, Shakuntala, Indumati, all rolled into one" (*Hayavadana* 16). In a similar way, Padmini accepts Devdatta's proposal for marriage but has Kapila in mind. She

is drawn towards his physical vigour. Her feelings for Kapila become obvious on their trip to Ujjain when Padmini keeps on appreciating Kapila's skilful control on the bullock cart. Devadatta shows his disappointment as he grumbles "she had so much to talk about all day, she couldn't wait for breath. Now, not a word" (*Hayavadana* 26). The hidden triangular love story that slowly unfolds to the major characters of the play, is clear to the audience from the beginning itself. Therefore, the behaviour of the characters seems paradoxical because they are unable to grasp the truth. P. Dhanavel states, "the pervading tone of the play is ironical throughout, touching upon satire at times. By ending the play with laughter, the playwright makes the audience laugh. Thus the condensation at the generic level is manipulated superbly by the playwright's ironic vision" (171). The audience here enjoys being a part of the story where they can relate well to the twists and turns in the plot. They feel privileged as compared to the characters when they understand the hidden meanings of the words and actions of the characters.

In *Tughlaq*, it seems irrational of the king Tughlaq to shift the capital of India from Delhi to Daulatabad, to centralise his power near the border and to "symbolise the bond between Muslims and Hindus" (*Tughlaq* 4). The shift was meant to debilitate the authority of the nobles and balance the power of the Muslims of Delhi with the Hindus of Daulatabad. The forced dislocation of the people results in a loss of lives and unprecedented suffering on their way to Daulatabad. R.P. Pradhan states for Tughlaq, "Most of his plans were Utopian, fantastic and visionary. They ended in fiasco and brought about untold human suffering on a large scale" (85). The role of the stepmother in killing Najib, and Tughlaq's plan of getting Sheikh-Imam-ud-din killed is evident to the reader. In Scene Two, the hatred of the stepmother for Najib is visible whom she considers her rival noting his influence on Tughlaq. Her feelings are revealed when the she confesses, "I am glad Najib is dead. He was leading you astray. It is because you would not trust anyone as much as him" (*Tughlaq* 66). In another scene, Sheikh Imam-ud-din who not only

openly criticizes Sultan for his policies but also incites the public against him, is deviously trapped by the Sultan as his envoy for peace and is assassinated. In Scene Nine, Aziz and Aazam murder the descendant of Khalif – Ghiyas-ud-din Abbasid, and Aziz enters Tughlaq's fort disguised as Khalif himself. Their treachery is known to the audience from the very beginning but is disclosed to Tughlaq at the end of the drama, in Scene Thirteen.

Another disastrous decision that Tughlaq takes is the economic substitution of silver dinars with copper currency to cover up the financial crisis faced by the kingdom. However, copper coins are easily fabricated and carts full of forged currency are dumped in his rose garden. Tughlaq's erroneous decisions stare him in the face but he is unable to rectify them in the end.

Dramatic irony is used to heighten suspense. When the audience is aware of the inner workings of the plot, there is more suspense, as they wait for the crucial moment when reality dawns upon the characters. *Tughlaq* is an intellectual and idealist ruler, who in the pursuit of power does not let anyone pose a threat to his ambitions.

There is a skilful use of **Speech devices** in these three plays. The character when alone on the stage, speaks out his or her thoughts aloud, thereby inviting action and also facilitating audience understanding. The effective use of monologue, soliloquy and asides can be variedly seen in *Hayavadana, Tughlaq* and *Nāga-Mandala*. They are employed in the plays to develop the theme and reveal the characters' point of view.

Monologues originated during the ancient Greek theatre when not more than three characters performed on the stage along with the chorus. It is believed that dialogues evolved from the monologues. Ancient Roman theatre made extensive use of linking monologues to indicate the passage of time. Later on, it was ingeniously

used by the Renaissance and post-modernist theatre to fulfil dramatic needs. Monologue is a speech when one character speaks out his or her thoughts and feelings loud without addressing any character. M.H. Abrams describes it as "a lengthy speech by a single person" (70). Monologue is delivered by the character who is either speaking to the audience or to himself or herself. It can occur any time in the play, either as a prologue or the epilogue or in the main action, highlighting the skill of the author as well as the character. Chris Baldick in *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* defines it as, "An extended speech uttered by one speaker, either to others or as if alone" (214).Monologue became a popular means of literary expression during the Victorian period. The skilful use of this form by the Victorians is generally taken as a reaction to the confessing style of the Romantics. Robert Browning's dramatic monologues like *My Last Duchess* and *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister* and Alfred Tennyson's *The Lotus-Eaters*, *Ulysses* and *In Memoriam* were widely appreciated.

In Karnad's plays, the speeches of Bhagvata of *Hayavadana* are perfect examples of the Monologue, where Bhagvata introduces the characters and the story-line to the audience. The plot of Padmini and her two lovers and the sub-plot of Hayavadana are deftly unified by Karnad's Bhagvata in such a way that he performs two roles – that of a character and of an expositor. M.K. Rukhaya states, "Like the Greek chorus, he initiates, concludes and comments upon the play" (1). The play begins with the invocation of Lord Ganesha, who is the embodiment of success and perfection with an elephant head, cracked belly and a broken tusk. Bhagvata then sings verses in praise of the lord by describing him as, "O Elephant-headed Herambha….O single-tusked destroyer of incompleteness/ we pay homage to you and start our play" (*Collected Plays I:* 105), thus forming the background for the search for completeness prevailing throughout in the drama. Bhagavata then narrates the story like that of a folk-tale: "This is the city of Dharmapura, ruled by king Dharmasheela…Two youths who dwell in the city are our heroes. One is

Devadatta…" (*Collected Plays I:* 106). At many instances in the play Bhagavata speaks the voice of the characters by showing a deeper knowledge of the character's psyche. As Padmini desires for a 'complete man' this is conveyed by Bhagavata's comment on behalf of Padmini, when she meets Kapila again: "And as I saw him change, I couldn't get rid of you. That's what Padmini must tell Kapila. She should say more, without concealing anything. 'Kapila, if that *rishi* had given me to you, would I have gone back to Devadatta some day exactly like this?' But she doesn't say anything. She remains silent" (*Hayavadana* 56). The narrator also broadly projects the theme that the head is superior to the body when he pronounces, "As the heavenly Kalpa Vriksha is supreme among trees, so is the head among human limbs" (*Hayavadana* 40). The monologue is a rich illumination of a character's heart and soul.

In *Nāga-Mandala*, the story is narrated at three different levels. These different levels of narrative technique, in form of the monologues, help in the accomplishment of the dramatic needs. The first level of narration is when the fictional playwright is introduced, who was cursed to stay awake that one entire night before the end of that month, whose boring plays often left the audience asleep. He is heard telling the audience, "I may be dead within the next few hours….Actually dead. I might die right in front of your eyes" (*Collected Plays I:* 247). He is shocked to see how all the flames group together in the temple and gossip. Each flame narrates a different set of stories related to the master of their house. This is the second narrative level. The third narrative starts with the arrival of the fifth flame in the ruined temple who further introduces the story and the song as narrator. On this the author again comments to the audience, "I had heard that when lamps are put out in the village…this is where they gather!" (*Collected Plays I*: 250). The author then starts helping the Story to narrate the main plot and comments on several instances in the play like telling the audience about suggesting the name 'Appanna' (which means 'Any man') for the character representing Rani's husband.

He explains to the audience the reason for the performance of the play, summons the musicians and discusses the end of the play.

The Story further narrates the fighting scenes and speaks about Appanna who is enraged due to the death of the dog which was serving as a guard to his house. The combat between Naga and the dog resulted in the dogs' death and then a mongoose was placed as a guard. The second tough fight between the two again resulted in the death of the mongoose while Naga received grievous injuries. As a result he did not visit Rani for next fifteen days and she spent her nights crying and waiting for him. The story thus narrates the scene to the audience "The death of the dog infuriated Appanna.…Rani spent her nights crying, wailing, pining for him….Needless to say, when her husband came during the day, there were no scars on him" (*Collected Plays I*: 281). In the end the Story narrates the end of the third narrative to the author as well as to the audience. Here, the monologue by the flame shows a simultaneous connection between the inner world of the character Rani and the outer world of the audience. The monologue helps to convey the thoughts and expressions of the character through speech and thus makes it easier for the audience to relate to the characters.

Soliloquy is when single character speaks aloud his or her feeling and pretends to be unaware of the audience. It is a Latin word where *solus* means alone and *loqui* means to speak. This device was long an accepted dramatic convention, especially in the theatre of the 16th to 18th centuries. Long and ranting soliloquies were popular in the revenge tragedies of Elizabethan times, such as Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (1582), and in the works of Christopher Marlowe. Soliloquy was a popular form used in Elizabethan drama and notably in the plays of Shakespeare where the characters' thoughts and feelings were presented dramatically through this device. Pierre Corneille, a French playwright, produced and used soliloquies that were lyrical and poetic in form with odes or cantatas.

Another French dramatist, Jean Racine, used soliloquies for dramatic effect in his plays. The overuse of soliloquy in the plays during the English Restoration period (1660–85) led to its falling out of favour. In spite of this, the soliloquy still remains a useful technique for revealing the inner life of characters and is thus considered an integral part of contemporary drama. Soliloquies reveal the truth and gives aesthetic pleasure during the folding and unfolding of the plot. They can even become major turning points in the play.

In *Hayavadana*, Padmini shares many of her thoughts and feelings with the audience in the form of a soliloquy. When Padmini observes Kapila, she speaks aloud, "How he climbs….And what an ethereal shape! Such a broad back: like an ocean with muscles rippling across it." She is fascinated by Kapila's agility and prowess. She continues: "he is like a celestial being reborn as a hunter…how his body sways, his limbs curves – it's a dance almost" (*Hayavadana* 26). This is a dramatic technique used by Karnad to make the dialogue and situation more effective by revealing the inner psyche of his characters. Padmini mixes the heads, grabbing the right opportunity and experiences the joy of completeness. Her strong yearning to be united with both the men propels the plot of the play. She marvels: "What a wide chest. What other canopy do I need….My Devadatta comes like a bridegroom with the ornament of a new body" (*Hayavadana* 41). Padmini admires the hybrid personality that is created with Devadatta's intellect and Kapila's muscular body.

In *Nāga-Mandala,* Rani is a sufferer and is imprisoned by her husband Appanna in her own house. She is usually transferred to the world of dreams and fantasizes her childhood with her parents. It is stated that she "talks to herself indistinctly" (*Collected Plays I:* 254). Rani dreams of an eagle taking her somewhere. She then asks the eagle and the eagle replies, "Beyond the seven seas and seven isles…Under that tree, your parents wait for you." So Rani says: "Do

they? Then please, please take me to them…immediately. Here I come" (*Collected Plays 1*: 254). She is then transported to the world of dreams which is expressed through her soliloquies. They work as a means to help her to escape from her isolation. She talks to herself and dreams that her parents embrace and caress her and cry. Her fantasy acts as an outlet for her grief and suffering and provides her temporary solace. The dream continues and it is depicted that a stag with golden antlers comes to the door. He calls out to Rani but she refuses to go with him. The stag explains, "I am a not a stag, I am a prince" (*Collected Plays I*: 255). Here, the audience indirectly visualizes the mental agony that Rani is going through. The dream has both the elements of a soliloquy and the monologue which serve two purposes, first as an escape mechanism for her and secondly, a revelation of her condition to the audience. In terms of theatrical significance, Rani's soliloquy in the dream is important in terms of development of plot and characterization.

In *Tughlaq*, soliloquies play a significant role in revealing the protagonist's state of mind, his dilemma and internal conflict during critical situations in his life. In the opening scene of the play, the old man shows his discontent with the administrative policies of the King Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and states, "God what's this country coming to!" (*Collected Plays I*: 5). When Tughlaq comes to know about the treachery of his step-mother – that she got the vizier Najib murdered, he orders his soldiers to stone her to death. He then cries and wails in his loneliness and prays to God for His mercy, "God, God in heaven, please help me…Only you…you…you" (*Collected Plays I*: 79-80). This gives an insight into his psychological turmoil and his incompetency as a ruler. Julia Leslie states about Tughlaq's personality, "The dominant figure is that of the Sultan, the chess playing Muhammad Tughlaq, whose character and behavior reveal an unsettling mixture of idealism and intrigue" (72). Another soliloquy occurs when Tughlaq hears the news of the murder of Aazam Jahan, who pretends to be the disciple and friend of His Holiness Ghiyas-ud-Din Abbasid from Arabia. Sultan was surprised that Aazam has

found the secret passage that is filled with corpses in the premises of the palace, and states: " (almost to himself) Don't you think it absurd that a man who has just come from Arabia should prefer the bloody streets to the palace?" (*Collected Plays I*: 91). The speech devices act like platforms where the characters vent their feelings and the audience derives contentment out of the concealed words buried deep in the characters' thoughts, thus giving an insight into the most profound emotions of the characters.

Symbolism occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as a literary movement, in poetry and other creative arts which originated in France, Russia and Belgium. It was a movement wherein symbolic figures of speech, indirect suggestions mystical ideas were used to express emotions in literature and fine arts. It was initially practiced by Jean Moréas, a Greek-born poet, critic and an essayist. He wrote mostly in French language and is considered to be one of the most important Symbolist poets. He wrote the *Symbolist Manifesto* (1886) that was published in the newspaper *Le Figaro*. In this French work, Moréas defines symbolism as, "a style whose goal was not the ideal, but whose sole purpose was to express itself for the sake of being expressed" (Qtd. in Lucie-Smith 54). The earliest use of symbolism was noted in the French poet Charles Baudelaire's poem *Les Fleurs du mal* (English: *The Flowers of Evil*) published in 1857. It expresses the changing nature of beauty in the modern, industrialized Paris during the late 19th century. Other leading French poets of this movement were Stéphane Mallarmé, Arthur Rimbaud, and Paul Verlaine. Symbolism makes the drama more interesting, as it can give a restrained or obvious meaning to the writings, beyond what is already mentioned.

In *Hayavadana*, symbolic elements are repeatedly used in the beginning of Act One. When the play begins, a mask of Ganesha is brought on the stage, to pay him obeisance and begin the performance. Lord Ganesha is projected as the

destroyer of obstacles but is the embodiment of imperfection and incompleteness: "an elephant's head on a human body, a broken tusk and a cracked belly" (*Collected Plays I:* 105). The introduction of the character Hayavadana, a man with a horse's head that again is symbolic of incompatibility and alienation. He wants to become a complete man. The female protagonist, Padmini's desire for completeness not with her husband Devadatta but his friend Kapila is symbolized through the description of a flower by the female chorus, "Why should love stick to the sap of a single body?…,why should it be tied down to the relation of a single flower?" (*Collected Plays I:* 117). Padmini's door of the house has the picture of a two-headed bird that symbolizes again the duality of her personality. She is unable to decide after her marriage, whether to love her husband Devadatta or his friend Kapila. Dolls are used symbolically as humans to express the dreams and fantasies of Padmini. Traditional puppets are used in the play to convey the passage of time and the gradual transformation of Devadatta's body. The dolls communicate with each other: "Doll I: His palms! They were so rough, when he first brought us here. Like a labourer's. But now they are soft – sickly soft – like a young girl's . . . /Doll II: His stomach. It was so tight and muscular. Now… /Doll I: It's loose" (*Hayavadana* 47). Karnad, through his dolls, reveals Padmini's suppressed longing for Kapila. The dolls report that in her thoughts she perceives a man, but not her husband, who "looks rougher and darker," who is of course Kapila (*Hayavadana* 49). Hence, the dolls serve the purpose of revealing the thought-process of Padmini as well as the passage of time.

The play *Nāga-Mandala* starts with female flames narrating stories to each other. The author has characterized the flames as female in gender as he says, "several flames enter the temple, giggling, talking to each other in female voices" (*Collected Plays I*: 248). The flames symbolize women who are famous for gathering, gossiping and making up stories. The story needs to be told, retold and interpreted and reinterpreted as stated by the Story to the fictional author, "You can't just listen to the story and leave it at that. You must tell it again to someone else"

(*Collected Plays I:* 252). Rani, the central character in the play *Nāga-Mandala* is locked in a house where nobody lives. Home is a symbol of love, care and security but the house locked from outside conveys a kind of imprisonment and lack of freedom. Although the woman's name is Rani (which means the queen) she is thrashed and abused by her husband Appanna who has an illicit relationship with a concubine. He is a stereotypical character who symbolizes the patriarchal attitude of society. The temple in *Hayavadana* and the house in *Nāga-Mandala*, both wear a deserted look symbolizing the vacuum in the life of the major characters – Padmini and Rani respectively. Amrita Sengar states about *Nāga-Mandala*: "The devices become an integral part of the whole and give the play an epic dimension. In the play, Karnad tries to fuse artistically dialectical relationship between tradition and modernity" (117). Karnad thus experiments with the use of different dramatic devices in his plays to create new meanings.

In *Tughlaq*, the very first statement, in the opening scene, by an old man, "God! What's this country coming to...I never thought I would live to see a thing like this" indicates the disappointment that the people feel for Tughlaq as a ruler. In another scene the game of chess that Tughlaq enjoys playing symbolizes his manipulative ways. Tughlaq considers his opponents as pawns of chess that he can use and remove at his will, so much so that he does not hesitate to eliminate his step-mother when he realizes that she does not support his decisions. Christine Gomez rightly observes, "Chess symbolizes Tughlaq's game approach to life wherein he regards the other people as pawns to be manipulated for his own advantage" (Dodiya 125).

In Scene Two, Tughlaq tells Barani that he has invited Shihabudin – the Prince of Shampanshahar. When Barani questions this, Sultan replies, "Forgive me if I let you down, Barani, but I must play this game my own way" (*Collected Plays I:* 22). Caught in Tughlaq's deft moves, Imam-u-din too pleads, "Don't play any

more games with me" (*Collected Plays I:* 29). Despite Muhammad's verbal confession that "there is no time for games", he never stops playing games till the end. Forests, jungles and gardens serve as a symbol of isolation and soul-searching for Tughlaq. The rose garden which ends up as a "rubbish dump" of the fake copper coins is suggestive of the burial of Tughlaq's dreams. He is found strolling alone at night in his garden.

The fort, like the self of Tughlaq and his rule, has "strange and frightening" passages within it. The guard rightly says if it ever falls it will "crumble from inside" thus foretelling Tughlaq's downfall (*Collected Plays I:* 62). The Amirs along with some courtiers and Sheikhs, led by Shihab-ud-din conspire to kill the Sultan at the time of prayers. The plan of Tughlaq's assassination while he is praying indicates that in the pursuit of power not even faith for God is spared. The plan is exposed by Ratansingh to Sultan's vizier and Shihab-ud-din is cunningly killed by Sultan. U.R. Ananthamurthy points out: "The use of prayer for murder is reminiscent of what Tughlaq himself did to kill his father. That prayer, which is most dear to Tughlaq, is symbolic of the fact that his life is corrupted at its very source" (ix). The fort has a long and dark passage coiled like an enormous hungry python inside its belly. The python kills its prey by twisting itself round and crushing it. Similarly, any living creature that enters the fort is crushed and swallowed by the Sultan's strategy. When the young man discusses about the magnificence of the fort with his grandfather, the old man replies, "Yes, it's a long passage, a winding tunnel, coiled like an enormous hollow python inside the belly of the fort" (*Collected Plays I:* 62). The python symbolizes Tughlaq's cunning and crooked tricks with which he traps those who rebel against him.

The frustration of Tughlaq is symbolized by vultures. It is symbolic that vultures in the form of rebels thrust their beaks into the flesh of Muhammad and destroys his peace of mind. Mohammad in a dejected mood states, "Don't you see –

This patient, racked with fever and crazed by the fear of the enveloping vultures, can't be separated from me?" (*Tughlaq* 58). The vultures also symbolize Tughlaq's ideas, ambitions, and desire of revenge. In a similar manner, the rose garden that the king envisages is the garden of ideals which has dried by towards the end. P. Bayapa Reddy remarks: "The rose is a symbol of the aesthetic and poetic susceptibilities of Tughlaq. It later on becomes a symbol of the withering away of all the dreams and ideas of Tughlaq" (Dodiya 155). Aziz and Aazam, the two thugs in Sultan's kingdom stand for the corrupt public officials. Sultan instead of punishing Aziz for his follies rewards him and gives him a higher post in the army. S.T. Kharat states, "It seems that Aziz is just another side of the evil and viciousness that reside in the Sultan. Actually what Aziz does in the sub-plot amounts to an imitation of the sequence of crimes committed by the Sultan" (43).

Symbolism thus represents something that is invisible. It gives a deeper and extended meaning to the actual words presented by providing more information than what is actually mentioned about the character or theme in the story.

As Pfister (1988) points out, drama is a narrative form that represents or 'tells' a story, sometimes literally so. Narrative communication in general involves several levels. Each level of communication comes with its own set of senders and receivers, narrators and audiences.

The dramatic techniques: Dramatic Irony, Speech Devices, Symbolism and Masks include the sophisticated use of levels of narration to create an impact. The speaker and the receiver on the stage – each carries a level of understanding of the situation that is being depicted. However, this understanding may not be shared between the two. Similarly, the knowledge and understanding of the audience of the play regarding the action taking place, its causes and ramifications, may be far more than that of the characters on the stage. Dramatic techniques employ these levels of understanding and narration to create a dramatic effect. For example, speech devices like soliloquys and monologues carry one meaning for the speaker, however, other

characters are not privy to that. But at another ontological plane, the audience hears and appreciates the speech and derives meaning out of it. Similarly, dramatic irony is effective in a play since characters on one level of narration are ignorant of the reality, which is known and understood to the others or to the audience of the play. Symbolic elements and Masks, in the same way, depend on the superior understanding of the spectators who realize the complex nature of the truth that is hidden to the characters being portrayed.

The **Mask** is a multidimensional, multifaceted entity which can either portray a particular kind of character, whether be a hero, a devil, a ghost or any mythological character. It can also be used to characterise Gods, human figures or even animals. Oscar Wilde has said "A mask tells us more than a face." Masks are one of the most potential adjuncts for characterisation in drama. Masks are prepared using wood, ceramic, cloth or leather and are even decorated to create a strong impact. Masks can not only be used to engage the interest and attention of the audience but also to bring out the thoughts and feelings of the characters. It is a flexible and creative technique that triggers the imagination of the audience by making an idea instantly perceivable. A simple switch of masks can change the storyline and the role of characters within seconds. Masks are very effective in conveying subtle messages to the audience as they can be tragic in expression, conveying mourning or pain, vicious, to express cruelty and cunning, and can be comic, thus evoking laughter. Harris Smith avers, "The mask continues to be a vehicle by which dramatists examine the full range of human experience" (184). The use of the mask is one of the important techniques that provides the audience intellectual and aesthetic pleasure.

The use of masks in Greek theatre was popularized by four famous Greek dramatists: Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes. It is said that credit for the improvement of theatre also goes to Aeschylus, who introduced a definite actor's apparel which included the three essentials of the tragic costume: the mask, the long sleeved robe and the tall buskins. However, against all opinions, the mask

continued to hold an important place in the works of major modern playwrights such as Bertolt Brecht, W.B. Yeats, Eugene O'Neill, Luigi Pirandello and Jean Genet.

Brecht in his *The Life of Edward II of England* projected the soldiers in white painted faces for a frightened look. He subsequently used the idea of masks in many more of his plays. Each dramatist had an idiosyncratic view on the use of masks and its portrayal which was either due to his outlook or the influences of his contemporaries. Smith explains, "Godon Craig and Ezra Pound introduced Yeats to the theatrical possibilities of the mask" (Smith 158). W. B. Yeats used satire masks, that is, half-human and half-bestial creatures, for ridicule and irony in his play *On Baile's Strand* (1906). In *The Death of Cuchulain,* Yeats used masks to display unpleasantness and eccentricity. Eugene O'Neill used masks in most of his plays starting from *The Hairy Ape* (1922) to the *Days without End* (1933). The different masks he used were archetypal that threw light on the divided human consciousness. Deceptive masks and Nietzschean masks indicate suggest an underlying level of reality that needs to be recognised. The masks of deception, as used by the onscreen superheroes like Batman, Superman, Spiderman, Zorro, are worn in order to get into another role. When the mask is removed they get into their former self and resume their normal life-style. Kathleen Higgins mentions the quote given by Friedrich Nietzsche: "All great things must first wear terrifying and monstrous masks, in order to inscribe themselves on the hearts of humanity" (43). That means a mask is a projection of what others perceive of someone. One can wear masks intentionally or unintentionally, like in their behaviour or in a role-play, and appear to be someone they are originally not in life. This also means that around every profound spirit a mask grows continuously owing to misinterpretations and misperceptions created by the common people. Luigi Pirandello used masks to differentiate the six characters from the rest of the actors in his play *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1925) whereas Jean Genet in his plays *The Black* (1958) and *The Screens* (1961) used masks to denote different people in society.

The essence of Karnad's dramatic genius is his use of folk tales, legends and myths which he reinterprets in a modern and contemporary way in his plays. Some of techniques in *Hayavadana* include providing an alienation effect through the *Sutradhar* (Bhagavata), story-within-a-story, starting the play with invocation of Lord Ganesha and use of masks and dolls. In the article "Theatre in India" Karnad explains how the idea of the use of masks germinated in his mind: "It was when I was focusing on the question of the use of masks and their relationship to theatre music that my play *Hayavadana* suddenly began to take shape in my head. The play is based on Thomas Mann's *The Transposed Heads*, which in turn is based on one of the riddles in anthology *Vetalapancavimsatikatha.*" He continues, "The basic equation in the tale of the head with the man's person seemed to me to provide perfect justification for the use of masks" (346). The difference in approach of the use of masks between the western and Indian theatre is well summarized in Karnad's *Three Plays* as quoted by Jaya Kapoor: "Western theatre has developed a contrast between the face and the mask – the real inner person and the exterior one presents, or wishes to present, to the world outside. But in the traditional Indian theatre, the mask is only the face 'writ large,' since a character represents not a complex psychological entity but an ethical archetype, the mask merely presents in enlarged detail its essential moral nature" (71).

Hayavadana focuses on the theme that the identity of a person is the amalgamation of the head and the body. It is inspired by the Sanskrit folktale *Kathasaritsagara-Vaital Panchavinashaati* and is partially based on Thomas Manns' *The Transposed Heads*. The title *Hayavadana* means the one with a horse's head, which justifies the use of masks in the play. The character Hayavadana is Karnad's own invention. All the three major characters of the play – the two men with the transposed heads and the one with the horse's head, wear masks. The theme of the play is a sense of yearning for that which is unreachable. Krishna Gandhi states; "It's this yearning that makes people restless...reach for extraordinary

things...but the ideal of perfection itself is ambiguous. The character of Hayavadana is invented as an example of this ambiguity" (Qtd. Chinnasami 33).

The play begins with the arrival of the mask of Lord Ganesha on the stage "An elephant's head on a human body, a broken tusk and a cracked belly – whichever way you look at him he seems the embodiment of imperfection, of incompleteness...with his crooked face and distorted body, is the Lord and Master of Success and Perfection?" (*Collected Plays I*: 105-106). The *Sutradhar* starts with the invocation of God through a song. Noticeable is the fact that although Lord Ganesha has the head of an elephant and body of a man, he is still considered the epitome of perfection. Lord Ganesha's idol on stage not only foregrounds the significance of God's blessings but also underlines the concept of the play, man's desire for completeness.

Sutradhar Bhagwat, who presents and directs the play in the *Yakshagana* traditional form, introduces the sub-plot of the play to the audience. The play begins with a child riding a man while wearing the mask of a horse, depicting Hayavadana, a man with a horse's head. This again presents a search for wholeness – Hayavadana wants to be a complete man. He is the offspring of a princess and a divine being, a white stallion. Bhagvata guides him to the Kali temple where the transposition of the heads of the two male protagonists takes place. This is the introduction to the main plot.

In the play, the two friends Devadatta and Kapila are perfect examples of intellect and body who are represented by inanimate static masks, while their physical appearance and actions reflect their individuality. Devadatta endows all that is expected from a Brahmin youth, and Kapila, the son of an ironsmith, has a handsome body like that of a wrestler. Both have a common love interest in Padmini who is married to the intelligent Devadatta but is still attracted to Devadatta's friend Kapila because of his physique. Her desire for both of them becomes the cause of

dramatic conflict in the play. Padmini's interest towards Kapila is explained to the audience by Karnad with the use of masks and dolls in the play as she visualizes the metamorphosis of Devadatta's lean body to Kapila's strong body. During their conversation the two dolls discuss the innermost desires of Padmini as revealed in her dreams: "DOLL II: Especially last night – I mean – that dream... /DOLL I: Tut! Tut! One shouldn't talk about such things. /Doll II: It was so shameless..." (*Collected Plays I*: 162). This is conveyed to the audience by a change of masks to create a realistic effect.

The use of masks is one of those techniques that manifest the desire of what one embodies or what one has achieved. In a combat the duo cut off their own heads primarily as a sacrifice for each other and secondly, out of their love for Padmini. Padmini is another symbol of desire for completeness. The female chorus sings: "why should love stick to the sap of a single body? When the stem is drunk with the thick yearning of the many-petalled, many flowered lantana, why should it be tied down to the relation of a single flower" (*Collected Plays I*: 178). The name Padmini means the lotus flower. Chinnasami explains that she is very similar to a lotus, "Rooted to the earth and with the flower turned skyward, she symbolizes the fundamental nature of the human body: it is torn between the downward earth and the upward heavens, itself being impressionable" (33).

By the virtue of Goddess Kali, Padmini in her excitement exchanges the head of Devadatta and Kapila so that she can be benefitted by the qualities of both. There arises a confusing question of who becomes who? Whose head is on whose body? This switching of characters within a minute is depicted on stage by the change of masks. It is a confused situation and the question of identity suddenly assumes significance. However, as Devadatta appears with a dark mask and Kapila with a pale coloured mask, the interchange of the head of the two characters is very clear. Makarand Paranjape states, "Shapeshifting in Karnad's plays is a means to

illumination and self-knowledge, not only for the characters, but for the audience" (95). Despite its limitations the mask as a device gives the audience an intellectual and imaginative realization of the fact, and synchronizes the concealing and the revelation of the characters.

In *Hayavadana*, the scene of Devadatta's suicide is described through the speech of *Sutradhar*. When Devadatta has severed his own head from his body, Kapila rushes to him and "*Lifts his truncated head and moans*" (*Hayavadana* 30). The head that Kapila lifts up is the mask. It is described Padmini further finds herself at a crossroad and is unable to decide who her husband is and mixes up the heads. Here, we can see Brechtian impact on Karnad as he uses the alienation effect to distance the audience from the world inside the play. The audience observes the working on the stage as the masks of Devadatta and Kapila are interchanged. The audience can see the original faces of the two actors until Padmini is commanded by Maa Kaali to fix them back. It is Padmini puts the heads that is, the masks back. But in her excitement she mixes them up so that Devadatta's mask goes to Kapila's body and vice versa. The change of masks indicates the change of heads. N.P. Ashley says "Karnad controls the emotions released through the play deftly through the alienation technique, masks and puppetry, while the sharpness of interaction enables him to shift the transcendental and physical preoccupations of Mann on the sociological and the physical plane" (174).

The desire for completeness, that Padmini represents, ends in utter failure. As the head governs the body, Devadatta and Kapila gradually revert to their natural selves. Now, her desired Devadatta stops writing and Kapila loses his prowess. Padmini's juxtaposition of Kapila's strong body and Devadatta's brilliant head miserably fails to achieve unification and they achieve their old selves again. In *Hayavadana*, the use of masks is at its virtual best where Karnad presents the conflict between the body and the soul using the masks. The mask is a central

metaphor of theatre and is symbolic of shape-shifting. The mask in turn represents the unnatural transformations in myth when a plant becomes a bird or a man becomes an animal. In this play transformation of a man to horse is represented to the audience by effective use of the masks. The two plots of *Hayavadana* and Padmini blend together at the end of the play. The child riding *Hayavadana* is revealed to be Padmini's son and *Hayavadana* who desires to be completely human, against his wishes, is converted into a complete horse. The plot is built in the style of a story-within-a story and explores the theme of the adopted identity growing into the actual identity.

In *Hayavadana,* the mask, is an important element of the dramatic devices. Since the mask represents an external front, it highlights the presence of the internal psyche of the characters which might be very much in contrast with the external self which is being explicitly portrayed. Karnad employs the use of the folk device, the mask, to project various personalities of his different characters, like a pale-coloured mask for Devadatta, dark-coloured mask for Kapila, a mask shaped like an elephant's head for Lord Ganesha, a mask for Goddess Kaali with a dark but beautiful face and a red tongue, and a horse's head as a mask for Hayavadana, thus exemplifying the effect of a variety of masks upon the audience. Karnad has beautifully adapted the tale and plot of *Kathasaritsagara* and *Transposed Heads* and presented it on the stage with use of different dramatic technique especially the masks thus endowing it with meaning. The mask as a theatrical device may have been used since times immemorial itself but even in modern theatre with all the technological advancements it still finds it relevant and important.

Karnad's second play *Tughlaq* is an outstanding chronicle-play based on historical facts. Karnad's protagonist in the play is a faithful portrait of Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq (1325-51), a great scholar and the most idealist ruler of medieval India. Karnad's *Tughlaq* is rightly considered a piece of theatre "par

excellence". Karnad experiments with a variety of theatrical techniques to create visual and auditory images, thereby producing the desired dramatic effect on the stage. By employing different devices – spectacle, quick shift of scenes, blackout – he controls the movement of the play and its impact on the audience. Spectacle refers to all the visual aspects of production, scenery, lighting, costume, make-up and the business and the movement of the actors. His technique of using masks is one of them that makes the play fascinating. Shubha Tiwari states, "Tughlaquses religion as a mask to play his political moves and intrigues" (106).

Inviting Sheikh Imam-ud-din to Delhi is a political move to trap him. The Sultan comes to know that Sheikh Imam-ud-din has a faint resemblance to him and this is an opportunity to be exploited. In Scene Two, Muhammad asks Barani about the Sheikh, "So you've heard him, Barani. What's he like? Is it true he looks like me?" (*Collected Plays I*: 18). Later, the Sultan persuades Sheikh Imam-ud-din to go to Ain-ul-mulk in the name of religion with his message of peace and in view of the safety of the Muslims if war breaks out. He tells Sheikh Imam-ud-din: "He respects you as every Muslim in India does. He will trust your word...will you please go as my envoy and dissuade him from this folly?" (*Collected Plays I*: 29). The Sheikh suspects his motives but Muhammad convinces him through different arguments: "You can't deny that this war will mean a slaughter of Muslims at the hands of fellow-Muslims. Isn't that enough for the great Sheikh Imam-ud-din?" (*Collected Plays I*: 23). In the end the Sheikh accepts the offer and feels delighted to be the emissary of the Sultan. While getting ready Muhammad asks Imam-ud-din, "'will you accept the robes now?' (*It is mentioned, he puts on the robes. Muhammad places the headdress upon him. They stand facing each other. The dress makes them look even more alike*)" (*Collected Plays I*: 31). The Sultan's soldiers thus, treacherously kill Sheikh Imam-ud-din. The crafty intriguer and manipulator overthrow the fearless and tireless fighter for Islam. The murder of the Sheikh leads

to the intrigues of the courtiers of the kingdom. There is a gradual deterioration of Tughlaq from an idealist to a mad tyrant.

Karnad has employed the mask of the cobra in *Nāga-Mandala* to create the character of Naga in the play that enables the audience to accept the transformation of Appanna into a cobra between the scenes. Karnad has used a cobra with magical powers in the play. R. Chanana states, "The theme of the play reminds us of the Kerala Naga cult. This experience makes acceptable all the possibility of Naga becoming performer and the performer becoming a Naga in the aesthetic manner. In other words, the physical experience of Naga cult trance dance accepts the theatrical concept of transformation as the possible result of reality" (894).The Cobra (a Naga who drinks the magical potion) then falls in love with Rani. He enters the house through the drain in the bathroom at night and once inside takes on the appearance of Appanna, the husband. In Act one Story says, "As you know, a cobra can assume any form it likes. That night, it entered the house through the bathroom drain and took the shape of – / (*The cobra takes the shape of Appanna...call him Naga, meaning a 'Cobra'*" (*Collected Plays I:* 267). The Naga summons his magical powers and becomes as thin and small as the size of Rani's tresses. Here the presence of Naga becomes a necessity for Rani to escape from the reality. The use of the Naga mask by the playwright is an attempt to link Indian rituals and theatre.

The greatness of Karnad and his contemporaries lies in providing freshness and innovation to the dramatic forms that had existed from the very beginning in Indian folk forms. The new metamorphosed form amalgamates the conflict of the colonial-cultural past with the contemporary issues in modern Indian theatre. Among all the dramatists of this era, Girish Karnad, in particular, has carved a niche for himself in the field of Indian drama through the use of dramatic techniques in all his plays and has achieved a greater connect with the audience. G.A. Ghanshyam states, "Girish Karnad makes use of myths, mythologies, and folklore as his source

for his plays, not for the glorification of the chosen myths but to relate the myths to the present and to the past beliefs found in these myths" (327). Karnad manoeuvres and uses the techniques – Dramatic Irony, Speech Devices, Symbolism and Masks in his plays deftly. He analyses life and society in his dramatic pursuits that stimulates the audience intellectually.

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Chapter Three

Dramatizing Spectacle and Action

Girish Karnad has also written plays that owe their source to Indian history. Weaving his tales around legendary figures drawn from various periods of Indian history and folk tales, Karnad has given most of them a contemporary interpretation. According to Nietzsche, "History is necessary to the living man in three different ways: in relation to his action and struggle, his conservatism and reverence, his suffering and his desire for deliverance" (70). In other words, the past helps us to comprehend the present. As a reader of Karnad's plays, one has to acknowledge their sources as almost every text has a recorded source from where the plot is derived. Julia Leslie states, "Karnad's play is a complex modern tragedy, reflecting the tensions of the educated urban Indian caught up in the contradictions of his time" (56). As discussed in previous chapters, the common sources of his plays include myth, folk tale, Puranas, historical chronicles, epics, etc. The modern dramatists tend to use episodes from epics, or any well-known historical or political event, or adapt a popular meaningful myth for their plays.

This chapter deals with the concepts Plot and Subplot, Costumes, Stage combat and Lighting in Karnad's plays – *Yayati* (1961), *Talé-Daṇḍa* (1990) and *The Fire and the Rain* (1998). Lighting along with costumes, sounds, makeup and other theatrical techniques coordinates and works well to deliver the right impact of the theme and the plot. Karnad's plays are designed to be performed on the stage, with detailed directions to guide the director and the actors. At another level, the element of performance is highlighted, as spectacle and drama dominates most of the scenes. The plot and the subplot, stage combat, costumes and lighting – each of them draws attention to the play as performance.

Richards Schechner's *Performance Theory* propounded by him in 1988, is profound and revolutionary and is applicable to theatre practitioners and the strategies they employ for the performance of plays. This perspective regarding performance is wide and includes much more than theatre, ranging from everyday

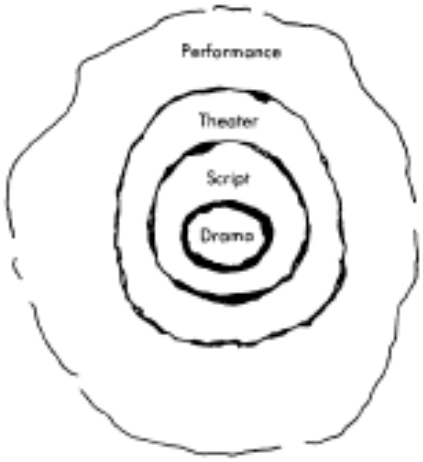
life to rituals and art. Schechner draws attention to the performative nature of social interaction, where events, rituals, daily chores – are all governed by a code of performance. This theory suggests that each and every individual acts in different situations in a way that is different from what he essentially is, and enacts roles according to the need of the hour. The clothes one wears to the food one eats or conversations one holds, communicates and reinforces the identity of the individual in the society. Drama plays a major role in our lives. As individuals with one's own personal experiences, people experience drama in real life. As on stage, individuals in real life also cry, laugh, and feel happy, angry or sad. Like characters on stage, people also come and go in the lives of others. Similar to actors on the stage, people in real life are also performers in one way or another. People want this identity to be taken seriously by the observers so they try to perform their roles well.

The paid theatre artists or performers try to achieve the effects towards a specific goal. Skilled performers try to get under the skin of the character as the role demands. Some individuals are able to achieve a permanent change in their personality, whereas others are not. An artist is like an empty vessel in which the character of the drama takes the desired shape. An artist can therefore have multiple personalities for multiple roles. Actors not only help to move the plot forward but also entertain the audience through their performance. Several roles, defining the nature of the character may be assigned to one person. These individuals try to identify with the characters while their own personality lies somewhere a layer or two deeper.

Richard Schechner, in the third chapter 'Drama, Script, Theatre, and Performance' of his book titled *Performance Theory*, draws attention to the archaeological evidences indicating the existence of drama in pre-historic times. He states that masks, dancing and singing were used by stone age humans that not only imitated humans or animals but also the supernatural. The caves of the Palaeolithic times were the earliest hidden theatres. Scripts and rituals used during those times

were not performed through speech or written dialogues but through action. These action-based performances were more of an illustration than communication. With the rise of the dramas in Greek theatre, this came to be reversed and the focus was on action in an abstract sense, in other words, "a movement in the lives of people" (Schechner 69). Modern theatre reversed this again and manifestation was replaced by action in the form of doing.

Analysing the relationship between drama, script, theatre, and performance, Schechner presents it in the form of concentric rings, with performance as the widest ring with undefined borders, which includes all other aspects and drama as the smallest and the most precisely defined ring inside the circle. (Schechner Fig. 3.1)



In Schechner's pictorial representation of the aspects of theatre, drama forms the smallest but the most powerful circle. It is the concept, the theme, the issue which is shaped into a dramatic performance by people – the playwright, the director, the producer of the play. Drama is an independent entity and is passed on with times and to places. It exists and remains preserved for ages since it is relevant to all times and places. Hence one finds the basic motif of the good person at war with evil forces in all important cultures and their literary and artistic manifestations.

In Schechner's visual representation, the next circle that encompasses the circle of drama is the script. This is the written version of the drama that is transmitted between people, times and places. Acing as an encryption of the events – that include the action, characters, dialogues and the setting of the drama, the script has a physical shape and has to be legible and comprehensible in order to be utilized for dramatic performances. It prescribes the necessary elements for the proper enactment of the drama. The script can be taught and explained to others by the transmitter.

Schechner's image of the elements of drama presents the next circle that incorporates both drama and script, that is the theatre. This is the event or a series of situations that are enacted on the stage by the actors/performers. The theatre is actual and immediate and occurs when it is happening in reality. It can be discussed post-production in speech, writing or through other modes, but the actuality of its presentation is its pre-condition. The theatre is a physical manifestation of the first circle – drama, and the second circle – the script. The theatre gives a concrete shape to the drama that is visually discernible and aurally comprehensible when it is enacted on the stage. The characters articulate the script and enact the roles assigned to them and represent the drama for the audience through the theatre.

The final and the all-inclusive circle in Schechner's figure is that of the performance. This is the assemblage of events that include and affect all the individuals involved in the play, including primarily the performers and the audience. The performance involves an element of tentativeness and contingency, for the final enactment may deviate from the script due to unforeseen disturbances that may be unintentional or deliberate. Schechner states, "To summarize thus far: the drama is what the writer writes; the script is the interior map of a particular production; the theatre is the specific set of gestures performed by the performers in any given performance; the performance is the whole event, including audience and

performers (technicians, too, anyone who is there)" (83). The performance includes the spontaneous and the reflective response of the audience and drama critics. Performance as a category has flexible and permeable boundaries; hence the loosely-defined shape of the largest circle of performance in Schechner's representation. The flexibility is revealed in the fact that the roles of all the people involved in play are interchangeable – therefore, the spectator may act as a performer for some duration, the director may appear in the play as an actor, and so on. During celebrations and festivals spectators and performers often exchange their roles according to the demands of the situation.

Schechner thus represents all the significant elements of drama and their aspects and characterising features through a simple, but convincing image. The four elements of drama as explicated by Schechner have found widespread acceptance among critics, spectators and readers. In her study of Girish Karnad's plays, Tutun Mukherjee explains that she examines, "drama, script, theatre and performance as an integrated enterprise," and argues for "a convergence between 'drama' that is understood as a 'scripted text' and 'theatre' that is governed by a 'performative' text" (13). Use of terms like literature, drama and performance thus have undergone alterations based on aesthetic practice and the playwrights' or theatre groups' imagination.

Karnad's first play *Yayati* is taken from the chapter *Adiparva* of the *Mahabharata*, an Indian epic. The Mahabharata is an epic of 18 books called *parvas.* There are 100 *upa-parvas* or sections. There are 19 sections in the first book, the *Adiparva*. The story of Yayati also appears in the Book Nine, 19th Chapter of *Bhagavata Purana* (one of the *puranic* texts of Hinduism).

In the original myth, the mighty king Yayati, exchanged his 'old age' curse with his youngest son Pooru. Karnad's Yayati is a self-centred king, whose lust for Sharmishtha, a tribal girl and maid to his queen, is his tragic flaw. He is cursed by

his father-in-law Shukracharya for his infidelity. Karnad's portrayal of Pooru is also different from the Pooru portrayed in *Mahabharata*. Karnad's Pooru questions the legitimacy of his birth and hates himself for his misfortune. His acceptance of his father's curse is an attempt to compensate for his unworthiness. In the play, Yayati tells his daughter-in-law Chitralekha about Pooru: "He has taken the curse upon himself to come to grips with some inner turmoil of his own. He needs time to think. Time to recover...give it to him" (*Yayati* 64). It becomes evident in the Third Act that it is Sharmishtha who is Pooru's mother and not Devayani. This makes it clearer that Yayati has been into a relationship with Sharmishtha for long and has kept Devayani in the dark.

Sharmishtha wants Yayati to accept his destiny and adopt the life of an ascetic. Pooru has a feeling that he actually belongs to his mother's Rakshasa tribe and not to his father's Aryan dynasty. He suffers from an identity crisis.

Karnad's *Yayati* highlights the unquestioning obedience of sons to the parents. Dharwadker comments: "The epic does not question or criticize Yayati's motives when he demands that one of his sons assume the curse because he himself is not yet sated of youth" (*Collected Plays I*: xv). Karnad's version questions the patriarch in *Yayati* and effects a transformation in him. The indictment and subsequent suicide of Chitralekha, Pooru's wife, makes Yayati realize the horrors of his own life by accepting his fate and taking the curse back. Karnad has given the traditional, age old tale of the mythical king a new meaning. The duties and responsibilities of an obedient son towards his father and vice-versa are very well projected in the play. Chitralekha is not willing to lead her life with Pooru who is an old man now and chooses to commit suicide. She challenges the patriarchal laws by expressing her dissent through her wilful death.

In *Talé-Daṇḍa*, Karnad takes his inspiration from the historical Bhakti Movement, which swept through India during the 12th century A.D. in Kalyan,

Karnataka, and draws a parallel between the socio-religious, political and economic impact of the Mandir-Mandal conflict of the late 1980s. The play begins with the introduction of the protagonist Basavanna, who gathers a congregation of poets, philosophers and social revolutionaries, unmatched for their creativity and social commitment. This group of philosophers do not favour idol worship or temple worship. They are also critical towards the caste system and favour the equality of the sexes. Basavananna, the great *Sharana* poet-saint, made an effort to eradicate caste differences in society. This forms one of the principal themes of the play. In the play, the situation takes a violent turn and ends in bloodshed when a Brahmin girl marries a cobbler – the so called 'low caste'. In Hindi this play is known as Rakt Kalyan (*Talé-Daṇḍa*) that presents the story of a vibrant and prosperous society that plunged into anarchy and terror when the accepted caste divisions among the Hindus were questioned. M.R. Verma states, "Karnad's *Talé-Daṇḍa* is such a journey into history that brings forth issues equally relevant to our own times" (177). Karnad derives almost every play and its plot either from myth, folk tale, Puranas or some historical chronicles, epics etc. He seems to be inspired by Shakespeare whose plots have been traced to have historical and classical origins.

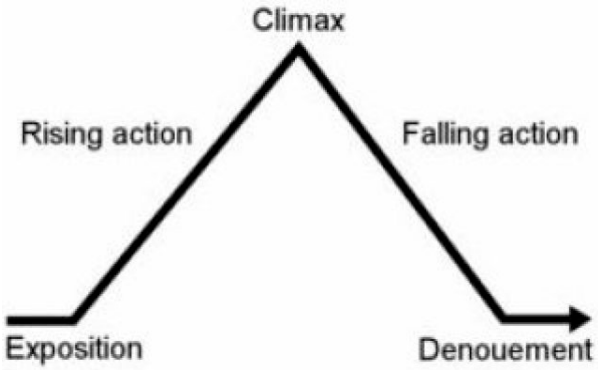
The story of Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain* is derived from the myth of Yavakri, which is again a part of the great Indian epic, the Mahabharata. The great Indian epic is said to have been narrated by the sage Lomasha to the Pandavas, in chapters 135 to 138 of the Vana Parva (Forest Canto), as Pandavas wander across the jungles during their exile. This little-known myth from the Mahabharata develops into a heart-rending tail of passion, betrayal and patricide with complex philosophical connotations. *The Fire and the Rain* presents a contemporary version of the myth wherein murder, jealousy and revenge play a dominant role in the plot. This play is a translation of Karnad's, *Agni Mattu Male* which was originally written in Kannada. Karnad, in the notes to *The Fire and The Rain* explains, "Agni is the Sanskrit word for fire...what burns in sacrificial altars, acts as a witness at weddings

and is lit at cremations....Malé is a Kannada word. It means rain, pure and simple" (*Collected Plays II*: 291). The fire in the drama stands for the hatred and jealousies that prevail in Raibhya's family and the rain symbolises an appeasement from God. G.A. Ghanshyam in his article states, "Through this play Karnad had tried to focus the egotism prevailing in the contemporary society by associating it with the mythological stories of the past" (186). One of the main characters of the play is Paravasu, a devoted priest and the eldest son of the great sage Raibhya. He performs the fire sacrifice for seven years to appease the gods and prays for rains for the drought-affected town. He abandons his wife Vishakha, his father Raibhya, his brother Arvasu and all worldly pursuits for the fire sacrifice. His prestigious position as a Chief Priest of the sacrifice creates conflict and disharmony within his own family and incurs the jealousy of his father and his cousin Yavakri.

A **plot** is the sequence of events that make up a story. Aristotle assigns great significance to the plot. S.H. Butcher explains: "The plot, then, contains the kernel of that 'action' which is the business of tragedy to represent." He further states that the plot "embraces not only the deeds, the incidents, the situations, but also the mental processes, and the motives which underlie the outward events or which result from them." According to S.H. Butcher, the plot is "the compendious expression for all these forces working together towards a definite end" (337). Aristotle states in *The Poetics* that a plot has a beginning, middle and an end. This was his three-part view of a plot structure (with a beginning, middle, and end – technically, the Protasis, Epitasis, and Catastrophe). But it is much more than simply telling of the events one after another. A plot needs a motivating purpose to drive the story to its resolution, and a connection between these events.

With passage of time in modern plays the plot structure has undergone many changes. A.S. Kline in his translation *Horace–The Odes* also mentions the Roman drama critic and poet Horace's five-act structure in his *Ars Poetica*: "A play

should not be shorter or longer than five acts" (172). In and around 1863, play wrights like Henrik Ibsen were abandoning the five-act structure and experimenting with three and four-act plays. For example, Ibsen's *A Doll's House* is a three-act play and *Hedda Gabler* a four-act play. Another German playwright and novelist Gustav Freytag (1816-1895) wrote *Die Technik des Dramas*, a definitive study of the five-act dramatic pyramid structure known as Freytag's pyramid. He designed the graphical representation of the plots of stories that were told in ancient Greek and Shakespearean drama. In Freytag's pyramid, the plot of a story consists of five parts: Exposition, Rising action, Climax, Falling action, and Resolution/Denouement.



These five elements of the plot can differ slightly from story to story, but for the most of the plays, it is a similar gradual build-up of events in the same sequence. The climax is mostly followed by a falling action and the resolution. (Freytag 114).

The **Exposition** is the introduction of the story which gives the information that is needed to properly understand the characters or the background of the play. This information can include the protagonist, the narrator, an antagonist, the setting and so on. This may also consist of some inciting incidents that trigger the story further. These incidents or situations may be subtly introduced and the reader or the audience might overlook them in the beginning and their significance may dawn upon the audience later. The **Rising Action** leads to the climax. Freytag calls it as the 'rising action' because in this a character goes through a set of tasks to reach the

final scene. The final point which creates suspense and anxiety in the minds of the audience is considered as the '**climax**'. It is the highest and the most exciting part of the story. All the rising action and conflict that builds up in the story and finally reaches its peaks, forms the climax. It is also a moment of great decision-making for the protagonist. The turning point, another name for the climax, can be considered as the incident that happens just before the climax. The **Falling Action** and **Resolution/Denouement** are the events that occur right after the climax. They are usually the after-effects of the climax. Resolution/Denouement is the end of the falling action and the conclusion to the story. There is usually a release of dramatic tension and anxiety (also known as *catharsis***,** a term given by Aristotle in his *Poetics*). It is the ending of the plot that reveals the final outcome of the conflict and the solution of the mysteries. The term Denouement has originated from an old French word *denoer*, meaning 'to untie' that is, untying the complexities of a plot. Sometimes stories have double endings with a lot of unanswered questions. It is then to the discretion of the reader or audience, whether to accept a resolution or to consider it open-ended.

In *Yayati*, the plot has a simple story of characters whose lives are coiled together leading to dilemmas at every point in time. In the main plot there are four main characters viz. Pooru, King Yayati, his wife and a Sutradhar, whereas the subplot focuses on King Yayati's wife Devayani and Sharmishtha, her maid. Seema Suneel states about Karnad's *Yayati*, "Karnad has taken traditional puranic themes but has give a fresh interpretation to these. His plays have pioneered a style which unites the elements of traditional Indian theatre, such as '*Yakshagana*' and strikingly modern sensibility for contemporary socio-political realities" (105). In *Yayati*, Karnad displays the influence of *Yakshagana* plays in which either the *Sutradhar* or the Chorus is to enter on the stage in the opening scene. *Yayati* opens up with the *Sutradhar* and he is addressing the audience: "Our play this evening deals with an ancient myth. But, let me rush to explain, it is not a 'mythological'. Heaven forbid!

A mythological aims to plunge us into the sentiment of devotion." The *Sutradhar* further adds, "Our play has no gods. And it deals with death. A key element in its plot is the 'Sanjeevani Vidya' – the art of reviving the dead, which promises release from the limitations of the fleeting life this self is trapped in" (Prologue to *Yayati* 6). He tells the audience about the desire for youth not only among gods and *rakshasas* (demons) but also among the humans, to master it. There is then a brief introduction of the inner chamber in King Yayati's palace. The exposition is the introductory part where the reason for the hatred between Devayani, the queen and Sharmishtha, the maid, unfolds. This is further projected through the fight between these two and another maid, Swarnalata. There was an impression in the beginning that Devayani is Pooru's real mother but in the Third Act it is revealed that it is Sharmishtha and not Devayani who is Pooru's mother. This further clarifies that Yayati has been in love with Sharmishtha for long and Devayani had no inkling about it. The plot reaches the climax in Act Three when Pooru takes the curse of old age on himself, which was originally given to his father. The falling action and denouement happens in the Fourth and last Act where Chitralekha, Pooru's wife, is not able to bear the shock of her husband's untimely old age and commits suicide by consuming poison. Yayati stares at the dead Chitralekha and realises that his actions have led to this consequence. He repents and gives Pooru his youth back.

A **subplot** is a secondary strand of the plot that is a supporting side-story for any story or the main plot. Subplots may connect to main plots, in either time or place or in thematic significance. They often involve supporting characters, those besides the protagonist or antagonist. Chris Baldick in *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* defines a subplot as: "A secondary sequence of actions in a dramatic or narrative work, usually involving characters of lesser importance...a parallel or contrast, or it may be more or less separate from it" (322). Subplots are distinguished from the main plot by taking up less of the action, having fewer significant events,

with less impact on the 'world' of the work, and occurring to less important characters.

In *Yayati*, the story of Devayani and Sharmishtha forms the subplot. Devayani is the daughter of Shukracharya, the preceptor of Asuras. She is a close friend of Sharmishtha, the daughter of the Asura king Vrishparva. The subplot is about their friendship irrespective of their different backgrounds or their parent's status. An incident is portrayed where the two friends went to take a bath in a river and the wind blew away their clothes from the banks. Sharmishtha, intentionally or by mistake puts on Devayani's clothes after failing to find her own. Devayani then accuses Sharmishtha of misbehaviour and, reacting violently, Sharmishtha drags her and throws her into a well. Yayati, who was then passing by, rescues Devayani by offering his right hand and pulling her out of the well. Devayani then claims that since the king Yayati had offered her his right hand, this meant that they were now officially wed. Yayati was hesitant but was easily persuaded by her father. Devayani also told her father about the insult by Sharmishtha and demanded revenge. Shukracharya threatened Vrishparva that he would resign his post and deprive the Asuras of the benefits of the knowledge of his resurrection science, unless Sharmishta was made a maid-servant of Devayani.

The plot structure is very significant in Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain* wherein the motif and pattern of events repeat and overlap with each other. In the concluding notes of the play, Karnad acknowledges: "The plot naturally fell into three parts, like a trilogy, each part with its own central action and lead character. The first two parts opened with the protagonist returning home after a prolonged absence while the third part culminated, not in some dramatic event, but in a debate on human frailty and divine grace." (*The Fire and the Rain* 85). The exposition of the play begins with the prologue where a seven-year-long *Yajna* (fire sacrifice) is described, which had been initiated in order to persuade Lord Indra, the God of

Rain, to relieve their village of drought. The play begins with the King explaining the purpose of the *Yajna* saying: "A fire sacrifice is nearing completion. We have conducted it without a blemish for nearly seven years…Let it rain….Once it rains, we can have as many plays as we like. As a sacrifices approaches completion, demon gathers in the shadows. The danger of disruption increases" (*The Fire and the Rain* 4).

In the First Act, the issue of the inter-caste love-marriage of a tribal girl Nittilai and a Brahmin boy Arvasu, the younger son of Raibhya, is being discussed. Andhaka, the *Sutradhar* and the actor, while conversing with them tells about the self-mortification and achievements of Yavakri, Paravasu's cousin and son of sage Bharadwaja. After his return from the penance, Yavakri realises that Vishakha, his childhood love, has married his rival cousin, Paravasu. He manages to meet her in a lonely part of the forest. She succumbs to Yavakri's impressive words and lust for her. Raibhya, being the father-in-law of Vishakha considers it as the insult of his family and creates a spirit named Brahma Rakshasa to take revenge from Yavakri. Vishakha runs to inform Yavakri of her father-in-law's malevolence. But he is quite confident of his safety since he has the consecrated water with him which will protect him. To save himself he starts running towards his father's hermitage. Ironically, Andhaka stops him entering his own father's hermitage and the Brahma Rakshasa appears there and kills him with the trident.

The rising action and climax reaches in the Second Act when Paravasu, against the rules of the Mahayagya (fire sacrifice), comes to his hermitage to meet his wife Vishakha. He is maddened and outraged at the knowledge of his wife's seduction by his cousin Yavakri and also by his own father. He also comes to know about his father's feeling of jealousy for not heading as the Chief Priest for the Mahayagya and he kills his father. Shailaja B. Wadikar quotes Arundhati Banerjee's statement about Vijay Tendulkar's play *The Vultures* that is applicable to Karnad's

The Fire and the Rain too: “The beating up of the father by his own sons,...the mutual hatred among the members of family underline the fundamental evil inherent in human nature” (94). Paravasu, with a covered face, goes back in the midnight to complete the fire sacrifice and tells Arvasu to perform the last rites of cremation. Arvasu, after performing all the last rituals of his father, reaches the sacrificial area, but is shocked to see how Paravasu treacherously blames him for killing of their father. Paravasu orders the Brahmins and the king to attack Arvasu and as a result the latter gets wounded.

The falling action and denouement happens in the Third Act. Nittilai, who got married within her caste, approaches Arvasu to nurse him back to good health. The play juxtaposes the contrasting situations. The Third Act concludes with the instruction of the Actor-Manager to Arvasu about the performance wearing a mask. “Surrender and pour life into it. But remember, once you bring a mask to life you have to keep a tight control over it, otherwise it’ll try to take over” (*The Fire and the Rain* 61).The denouement happens at the end of the play when all the dead characters come alive again and Lord Indra being finally happy blesses them by pouring rains.

Nittilai, the tribal girl and the actors, who together with Arvasu performed in the last act of the play, form the subplot. Karnad, with other themes of the play, explores the theme of the caste-system in Indian society through the character of Nittilai who is considered a girl from the ‘low caste’ hunter’s tribes. Arvasu and Nittilai loved each other and wished to get married as well but both the castes had their strict norms and penalties for marrying outside their respective castes. While Arvasu would lose his badge of Brahmin hood (which he was ready to do), Nittilai’s whole tribe had to be impressed by Arvasu before they consented to their marriage. Through Nittilai who is a simple, loving, good natured girl, Karnad presents a strong critique of ‘high-caste’ priests exposing their false sense of pride and mythical

grandeur. The Epilogue takes the audience from the world of Yavakri to that of the play by the nomads Indra, Vishwarupa and Vritra a play-within-the play, in which Arvasu puts up the mask and performs the role of Vritra, the demon, another actor as Vishwarupa (Vritras and Lord Indra's brother) and the actor-manager as Indra. The play-within-the play highlights the universal theme of treachery, loneliness, sibling rivalry and jealousy. In *The Fire and the Rain* Karnad explores the two worlds: Raibhya, Paravasu, and Yavakri represent a world of wickedness, greed and lust, whereas Nittilai and Arvasu represent a world of love and generosity.

In Karnad's *Talé-Daṇḍa*, the exposition of the play opens up with the introductory scenes of the major characters like Jagadeva, his father Sambashiva Shastri on his death-bed, Bijjala, Manchanna, and another major character and central figure of the play Basavanna. In the play, Basavanna advocated and propagated moral and spiritual values for a purposeful life. The play opens up with the introduction of Basavanna as a poet and social reformer who is believed to have lived in the 12th century in Kalyan (presently Karnataka). In the introduction to *Talé-Daṇḍa*, Dharwadker states that the play "goes further back in time to uncover the history of the majority religion turning against itself" (*Collected Plays II*: x). The theme of the play revolves around Basavanna and the accusations against him and its effects that he faces. The plot of the play is well-knit with a causal sequence of events, each interrelated with the other. M.H. Abrams says, "As a plot evolves it arouses expectations in the audience or reader about the future course of events and actions and how characters will respond to them." Abrams continues, "A lack of certainty, on the part of a concerned reader, about what is going to happen especially to characters with which the reader has established a bond of sympathy, is known as suspense" (225). The rising action is in the Second Act that examines the repercussions erupting out of the marital proposal of a Brahmin Madhuvarasa's daughter with the cobbler Haralayya's son. H.S. Krishnamurthy states, "The third act moves towards the climax when Sovideva seizes power from his father Bijjala

and imprisons him. Bijjala is killed by Jagadeva in an act of peevish rebellion" (Mukherjee 232).

The Subplot in *Talé-Daṇḍa* is of Sovideva, Damodar and Manchanna, when they hatch a plot against the king. In the beginning, the loyal servants of Bijjala are killed and then Bijjala is detained in his own palace. Basavanna requests the *sharanas* to stand by the king and save him from Sovideva. Most of the *sharanas* refuse to follow his orders. So Basavanna himself along with few *sharanas* visits King Bijjala and advises him to cling to the *Shivalinga* in the temple as that alone can save him from danger. As Basavanna leaves for Kappadi, the perturbed Bijjala frenetically sobs and laughs. Jagadeva along with other *sharanas*, in search of the prince, enters into the palace through a secret passage. But he does not find the prince and feels very disappointed.

Jagadeva then leads the *sharanas* to the inner shrine of Lord Shiva where the old king was hiding. Bijjala firmly embraces the Linga to protect himself. Then Jagadeva lies to him telling that Basavanna has sent him. Bijjala believes the lie and comes out of the shrine. In spite of the request of the other *sharanas* not to kill him, Jagadeva stabs him to death. Later, when alone, Jagadeva commits suicide. A.R. Shukla states: "Karnad's *Talé-Daṇḍa,* a tragedy, shows Basavanna's 'principle of movement and progress in human enterprise' ending in terror and bloodshed" (294).

Costumes as an art form play a significant role in defining some particular aspect of the personality and social status of a character in a play. They form an important dimension of dance and dramas. Costumes may define the gender of a character in some particular role in a drama. They designate the time period of a culture of a country. Costumes are part of all the traditional festivals all over the world and reveal the geographical area, time, season and weather. They embellish

the performances, storytelling and the realistic elements in the plays by giving meaning to the director's thought and make the play visually appealing.

Costumes in drama were first used by Thespis in an innovative manner in Greece during 6th century BC and they are still called 'the robes of Thespis'. Costumes of plays are designed in such a way so as to help the audience in understanding the plot of the play. In ancient Greek theatres, since men actors played the role of women on the stage, they had to dress up like women. They wore 'prosterneda' and 'progastreda' for female appearances. 'Prosterneda' gave the men the appearance of breasts and 'Progastreda' that of the women's belly. The costumes were designed loud and bright so that to catch the attention of the audience sitting far off. For theatrical purposes the clothes were decorated more than usual. High wooden shoes known as 'cothornous', were also worn by them to look tall and attractive (Conway). The poets introduced the costumes in the Greek plays by imitating the contemporary dressing: the 'chiton' and the 'hemateon'. The chiton was worn long and made up of linen or silk. The hemateon was exteriorly worn over the shoulders, like a drape and was usually made up of wool. Both chiton and hemateon were accessorized as per the occasion.

Costumes provide important visual clues from the characters' appearance, which enables the audience to quickly gather information about them and interpret their roles. Costumes along with make-up can communicate age, health, personality traits, social and economic status of the performers and the prevailing fashion trends. Costumes can also provide an effective means of communicating the time period and setting of the play.

Bharat Muni in *Nātyaśāstra*, the encyclopedia of Indian dance and theater, has discussed in detail how to costumes should be used for the presentation of a drama. He has described four kinds of costumes and make-up: model work,

decoration, painting of limbs and masks and costumes to imitate birds and animals. There are some images of local dramas where actors have used perishable material like animal skins, feathers, wooden hats in dancing, feasting and celebrating. In the early productions, actors used body paintings like putting blue paint all over the body to depict lord Krishna or lord Shiva.

In *Yayati*, the use of costumes is again a powerful signifier and emphasises class, caste and economic differences. In Act One, Sharmishtha, the tribal girl, explains how she loved and worshipped Devayani and her friendship in their childhood. She describes Devayani's simplicity: "she seemed completely unconscious of the fact that she belonged to a superior race" (*Yayati* 19). However, when Devayani was married to Yayati and Sharmishtha accompanied her to Yayati's place, Sharmishtha was able to experience at close hand the revulsion Devayani felt for the lower class. Sharmishtha narrated an incident to Yayati, when both the women went for swimming in the lake and exchanged their blouses by mistake while dressing up. On this Devayani commented, "You poor people. You only have to get into a piece of Arya attire. And you start fantasizing" (*Yayati* 20). The distinction between the two castes becomes so obvious that Sharmishtha feels hurt and disgraced at this comment that she drags and pushes Devayani into the well. Here the exchange of the dress leads to bitter feelings between the two friends. In this way, the message of social injustice, caused by casteism in society, is conveyed through the costumes.

In another scene, in the opening of Act Two, Yayati is on the bed and Sharmishtha is mentioned adjusting her dress. The fact that she is shown adjusting her dress reveals the intimate relationship they share. The costume again discreetly discloses to the audience the illicit ties between Yayati and the maid Sharmistha. By presenting this scene in such a way, Yayati's and Sharmishtha's close relationship is indicated by the playwright while avoiding explicit descriptions of their love making.

Karnad in his play *Talé-Daṇḍa*, draws a parallel between the socio-religious, political and economic condition of the 'Mandir' and 'Mandal' movement with the Bhakti Movement, which swept though India in the 14th to17th century. It was a religious movement that promoted the belief that salvation can be attained by anyone, and not by people of the so called 'upper caste' alone. A group of teachers or saintly scholars (called *sant*s) preached against rituals and casteism and expressed their love for god. During that period in Indian history the Brahmin widows, both young and old, had to shave their heads. They were tonsured to make them look ugly and deprive them to the core of their feminity, as also to protect them from the male gaze. This ritual has also been projected in the play when Jagadeva's father Sambashiva Shastri feels he is about to die and instructs his son about her mother, "Attend to her hair. Her head has to be shaved" (*Collected Plays II*: 13). In the play, when all the rites for the departed soul had been performed, Jagadeva, "who is now clean shaven and wears a sacred thread helps the Priest and the Brahmins to depart" (*Collected Plays II*: 35). It is also an indication that shaving the heads and beard and wearing a sacred thread by the younger males in the family is an age-old Hindu custom that is followed after the death of an elder member in the family.

Costumes play an important role in plays which employ rituals. Ritual clothing carries with it unspoken authority or power which is specific to a native culture. Under the leadership of the great *Sharana* saint poet, Basavanna, all the people irrespective of class and creed found full acceptance under the new sect *sharanas*. Aparna Dharwadker states about Karnad's *Talé-Daṇḍa* that it is "in fact about the historically grounded problem of irreducible religious and cultural differences on the sub-continent, and the fundamental divisiveness of hierarchical Hinduism" (*Theatres of Independence* 171). As Karnad explains, "it's about history, and deals with characters who set in motion the whole Bhakti movement" (13). The Virasaiva communitarians called themselves *Sharanas*. In the play, when a Brahmin s*harana* girl is about to marry a *chamar* (cobbler) *sharana* boy, the parents of both

the sides are nicely dressed up to invite Basavanna and his wife Gangambika and seek their blessings. Basavanna notices that they are dressed up and comments, "What's on! Some festival? Newsarees, new turbans. You look grand. Is it some special occasion?" (*Collected Plays II*: 43). The dresses indicate that a festive occasion is approaching. In the Tenth Scene when many *sharanas* are approaching King Bijjala's palace, his attendant Mariappa climbs on the King's shoulders and comments, "All around the temple of Ravana-Siddheswara...it's saffron...saffron" (*Collected Plays II*: 83). The statement picturesquely describes the approaching *sharana* followers who are wearing saffron coloured dresses.

The elements of the visual language are effective only if the audience interprets the role the way it is presented. Some items, such as scarves, cloaks, or symbolic hats, can help the audience to relate to a character. In Karnad's Prologue to *The Fire and the Rain*, the priests offering oblations to the fire are described as, "The priests are all dressed in long flowing seamless piece of cloth, and wear sacred threads. The king, who is the host, is similarly dressed but has his head covered" (*Collected Plays II*: 105). The fire sacrifice is an effort of Hindu priests to end the community'ssuffering. The extra-marital relationship between Yavakri and Vishkaha and the sensual fulfilment is depicted through the costumes of Vishakha, "Her clothes are torn. Her back is covered with mud" (*Collected Plays II*: 125) and looking at her, Raibhya, Vishakha's father-in-law comments, "Why are you so filthy? You look like a buffalo that's been rolling in mud" (*Collected Plays II*: 126). As Hinduism does not support adultery and treats it as a sinful deed, the character Vishakha in the play is highly condemned by her father-in-law, Raibhya, who can make out the sin she has committed, only after looking at her costume. Hindu *Shastras* consider marriage as sanctified and sacred. One who falls into an illicit relationship has to face social ostracism and disgrace. Raibhya berates his daughter-in-law Vishakha: "You whore – you roving whore!" (*Collected Plays II*: 127). The *Brahma Rakshasa*, a demon created by Raibhya's own strand of hair is after

Vishakha's lover, Yavakri, and is described as "he is thin, almost naked and holds a trident" (*Collected Plays II*: 128). Paravasu's silent act of betrayal is performed at midnight in disguise which is noticed by Raibhya who exclaims, "The chief priest of the royal sacrifice sneaks out at night, crawls home, his face covered like a leper" (*Collected Plays II*: 138). Karnad also refers to the '*dhoti*' worn by the priests, which is symbolic of their status in the caste hierarchy. The *dhoti* is the traditional dress of Indian male priests.

The younger son, Arvasu, is trapped to suffer the consequences of his father's murder which was actually committed by his elder brother, Paravasu. Nittilai saves him from the trap and in a scene it is told that she checks his fever by touching his forehead and feeling his wet clothes and then reties his dhoti telling him, "Wait! Don't be a child. Here. Let me tie your *dhoti* properly" (*The Fire and the Rain* 46). This again projects that the traditional dress of the male members of the Brahmin clan is a dhoti. The reference to the *dhoti*, a ritual costume which lost its significance during the British rule, but retrieved it again after India's independence, is an essential postcolonial element in Karnad's play.

Costumes play a vital role in the plays of Karnad. As his plays are based on myths, folktales and Indian history, the costumes used are typically Indian and help in foregrounding the cultural difference of Indians from the colonizers/Westerners. More than mere clothing for the actors, costumes are instrumental in setting the general mood of the play and, therefore, they are powerful signifiers. They perform a complex part in the theatre's semiotic system and help in the subversion of the colonial status. Though Karnad does not enter into a description of the costumes in his stage directions, most of his characters are portrayed in a typically Indian way befitting their role in the play. Hence in the history plays, characters of Tughlaq and Tipu Sultan use costumes befitting Muslim rulers. Tughlaq uses the costumes of the Sultanate period (fourteenth century) and Tipu is given the royal robes of a Sultan.

Talé-Daṇḍa depicts King Bijjala in the royal costumes of Hindu rulers. The characters in Karnad's plays are assigned appropriate dresses displaying their status in society. Costumes in Karnad's plays also help in conveying the time period in history, their social status, cultural background and religious affiliation. They help in setting the ambience and atmosphere of the time and the place depicted.

Costumes also serve to make the cultural difference evident in the plays. Most of the characters use typically Indian costumes which suit their age, personality and the situation in life. Though there is no direct description of the costumes, Karnad refers to the different dress codes casually in most of the plays. In his first play, *Yayati* there is a reference to the exchange of blouses between Devayani and Sharmishtha; in *Nāga-Mandala*, the Story is presented as a young woman in a colourful 'sari' reflecting her talkative and enthusiastic nature. Costumes also reflect the morality of the characters being portrayed. In *Nāga-Mandala* again Appanna asks Rani in the later part of the play: "Who did you go to with your sari off?" (*Collected Plays I*: 284). In *Bali: The Sacrifice* there is reference to the Queen's attire when she is with the Mahout and quietly plans to leave the temple: "She covers her face with her sari and prepares to leave" (*Two Plays* 82). In *Talé-Daṇḍa*, the king insults Sovideva by ordering for him a sari and a blouse to satirize his lack of masculinity. In *Flowers*: *A Monologue*, the description of Ranganayaki's saree and blouse highlights her sensuality and feminine charm that attracts the priest.

Girish Karnad has deftly made use of **Stage Combat** in his dramas. Stage Combat is a specialised technique that creates the illusion of physical combat without causing actual harm to the performers. The history of stage fighting can be traced back to the origins of the human species and their display of valour. Display of such art is natural in society of the warriors, and ritualized forms of mock combat often evolve into war dances. Fights staged for entertainment may also be in earnest

for the combatants, as was the case with the Roman gladiators, and any public duel, such as the judicial duel of the European Middle Ages.

Some famous classical plays with scenes of combat are: *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), *Henry IV* (1597), *Hamlet* (circa 1600), *Macbeth* (circa 1605), *Troilus and Cressida* (1609), *Die Räuber* (1781), *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897).

Actors and stunt performers need to be provided with proper equipments and facilities when it comes to enacting fighting scenes on stage, so that it looks effective to the audience. Fighting scenes thus can be performed repeatedly and safely in rehearsals and multiple takes on film. Stage combat keeps actors safe and audiences entertained using the illusion of violence: timing, measure, targets and victim-control. It can be unarmed using only the movement of hands and legs. Unarmed fights on stage appear to be brutal and instinctual, and include kicks, slaps, throws, pushes, strangulation, and much more. Armed fighting scenes can use weapons like swords, rapier, dagger, chains and bows and arrows.

In Karnad's *Yayati*, Sharmishtha brings turmoil in the life of Yayati. It is because of her that Devayani falls into the well and Yayati appears on the scene and saves her. Sharmishtha explains how she had in fact worshipped Devayani during the days of their shared childhood. Devayani seemed completely unconscious of the fact that she belonged to a superior race. Sharmishtha loved and was proud of Devayani's friendship. Sharmishtha's narrations of the past events indicate her sense of unease and unhappiness because no one tries to understand her perspective. People criticise Sharmishtha for she is considered responsible for throwing Devayani into the well but no one knows what instigated her to behave so rashly. Sharmishtha justifies her actions and narrates the incident to Yayati which took place when Devayani and Sharmishtha went for swimming to the lake. After swimming they lay on the bank to dry their hair but accidently their blouses were exchanged. Devayani commented on her friend's humble origin which disturbed

Sharmishtha. Losing her calm Sharmishtha grabbed Devayani's long, loose hair, dragged her to a nearby well and pushed her in.

In Karnad's *Talé-Daṇḍa*, Maduvarasa, a staunch and dedicated *sharana* wants to sacrifice his daughter's Kalavati's life by getting her married to a cobbler boy and serve for the cause of the *sharana* movement. He wants to attenuate the difference between the higher and the lower caste people. He also ignores his wife's Lalita's objection that is not in favour of this wedding. Although her objections are practical and justified, she fails to convince her husband. Rather she is forced to agree to his viewpoint for the sake of their new *sharana* religion. But all their efforts go in vain. In Scene Twelve, one of the *sharanas* named Gundanna comes rushing to Jagadeva and Malliboma when Kalayya and another sharana were practicing martial arts. He narrates the scene of the brutal killing of other two *sharanas* – Haralayya and Madhuvarasa by the king's soldiers. He recounts the horrible incident, "It's harrowing!...plucked out their eyes with iron rods...Torn limbs along the lanes, torn entrails, flesh, bones – They died screaming!" (*Collected Plays II*: 90). Gory scenes of violence and death are thus not depicted on the stage but only described by the characters.

In Scene Fourteen, Jagadeva stabs King Bijjala. The marriage episode leads to the mass destruction of *sharanas*. Even the strict follower of *sharanas*, Jagadeva forgets the *sharana* preachings and deceitfully kills Bijjala. In an interview with Karnad, U.R. Ananthamurthy comments: "There is this last scene in *Talé-Daṇḍa* where Bijjala tries to grasp what is happening around....The political significance of a boy from a lower caste sitting on the shoulders of a king, is not as important as the idea that Bijjala is seeking his liberation through this low caste boy. For, what the boy sees and comments upon is important for Bijjala's liberation" (133-34). The combat continues, "Jagadeva stabs him. As Bijjala collapses, he grabs Jagadeva. He thinks him of his son Sovi. Jagadeva pushes Bijjala, who rolls to the floor. Then he

leans against the wall and retches. Others watch" (*Collected Plays II*: 97). Stage combat thus effectively propels the story forward. The play clearly conveys the message that one needs to rise above the narrow outlook for the society. Otherwise humanity is destined to suffer ferocious barbarity and bloodshed.

In Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain*, Vishakha meets Yavakri after a long time and cannot resist the temptation and both fall for each other. It is indicated that they make love behind a tree on the bank of the river. In the meantime, Arvasu and his lover Nittilai are passing by and recognise the footprints and pot of Vishakha and can make out with her torn clothes and muddy appearance about her illicit affair with Yavakri. Vishakha runs from there and when she reaches the hermitage, she is horrified to see her father-in-law, Raibhya. Even he senses that Nittilai has just met her lover and shouts at her. The first stage combat is narrated as how Raibhya reacts: "*He grabs her by her hair and starts beating her. Kicks her. Arvasu can't bear to see it. He rushes to her help. Holds Raibhya back.*" Raibhya then asks Arvasu, "Where can she go? I want the truth and I'll kill her if necessary" (*Collected Plays II*: 127). At this, Vishakha reveals the truth about Yavakri to him and he loses his temper and calls her "whore", "roving whore" and leaves her up to the decision of her husband.

Raibhya sits cross-legged and sinks into deep meditation. Opening his eyes after meditation, he pulls out a strand of hair from his head and throws it to the ground. He comments: "Vishakha, go and tell your lover I accept his challenge. I shall invoke the *kritya* and send a Brahma Rakshasa, a demon soul after him" (*Collected Plays II*: 128). The Brahma Rakshasa appears. Thin and almost naked, holding a trident, he runs in the direction of Yavakri as the lights fade out. The audience is thus prepared for a dramatic scene between the *Brahma Rakshasa* who has been instructed by his master Raibhya to kill Yavakri. Vishakha and Arvasu then rush to Yavakri's defence. There he tells the blind gatekeeper Andhaka to be vigilant

and not to allow Yavakri to come out of the hermitage. But Yavakri is confident and impatiently waits for *Brahma Rakshasa*.

The scene prepares for the next stage combat between Yavakri and the demon. Yavakri loses the fight to *Brahma Rakshasa* and it is narrated: "The *Brahma Rakshasa* comes and spears him. Yavakri collapses in Andhaka's arms. The demon pulls out the trident and goes away" (*Collected Plays II*: 133). In Karnad's plays Stage combat effectively demonstrates situations which involve a strong outburst in the form of physical action. Aesthetically presented, stage combat enhances the dramatic effect of his plays.

Stage Lighting is related to the craft of lighting on the stage for drama, dances, opera and other performing arts to direct the focus, mood and atmosphere for the audience, whether romantic or intense. Lighting along with costumes, sounds, makeup and other theatrical techniques coordinates and works well to deliver the right impact of the theme and the plot. The lighting supports all the aspects of the stage. While the lighting primarily illuminates the actors, set, costumes and props, it also allows the whole piece to be enhanced. Parts of a set may need to be subdued, or certain props and costumes may need to be accentuated, and the actors must be seen in the proper context of their background and surroundings. Therefore, all objects that are visible on the stage need to be in balance and the light highlights the aspects that convey the sense of the key themes or issues.

The lighting does not distract the audience from a scene but helps in selective visibility by focusing the audiences' attention to certain areas, performers, props and or a set piece which may be the main emphasis in that scene. The key purpose to 'selective visibility' is that the audience is only viewing one thing at a time and not everything which may cause them to miss the importance of that scene.

Stage-lighting is intended to create moods and emotions in a scene that only reinforces that particular moment, which may include the actor, actress, and special objects as its supporting reinforcements. The mood helps to direct the audiences' emotions so that they may feel what the director or the performer attempts to portray and or convey, through words and actions.

The composition of the light forms and directs the eye and the thoughts of the mind of the audience and sets the picture of that scene. The composition therefore creates the entire perspective and forms an overall perception by using light. The lighting makes the performers, scenic elements and the props appear three dimensional against the other set pieces and the overall background. Stage light allows the performer, set and or objects to be enhanced. To reveal the form of a character is to help emphasize its body in order to be appealing, grotesque, taller, shorter, wider, or give him/her any desired look.

Lights allow the audience see what is happening on the stage or to highlight that area which the dramatist wants the audience to see. Its use will be inutile if the characters, props and stage setting are not visible. It highlights the particular angle of the stage that helps to project the sceneries and the action onstage. Lighting also sets the location and the time of the day, whether it is sunrise, sunset or day and night, indoors or outdoors. Sometimes, light also helps to break through the fourth wall (Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*) which is the imaginary wall between the characters on stage and the audience. It involves techniques to distance the audience from any sort of emotional involvement in the play. It reminds the audience of the artificial nature of the performance. After the action is narrated by the dramatist or the *Sutradhar*, the character directly steps into the plot on the stage with the light reflected on him.

In the Indian drama, it is mostly the *Sutradhar* that introduces the characters and the plot of the play. He is not simply a character in the play but as his name

suggests, he is the thread who knits all the scattered acts, like 'the holder of strings'. He is the narrator, commentator and the interpreter. In *Yayati*, he exists simultaneously in two dramatic realms and the play begins and ends with the *Sutradhar*'s expositions and announcements. At the beginning of the play, in the Prologue, he acquaints the audience with the plot, the storyline and the characters. Lighting on the stage plays a significant role in highlighting the importance of the *Sutradhar*. During each Act, he frequently interrupts the play's action for the purpose of cueing another scene, providing the audience with pertinent information, or commenting on what has just happened or what is about to happen. The stage is darkened at appropriate intervals to make the desired shifts in the scenes.

In *Yayati*, typically of all the plays by Karnad, the transition between scenes is indicated through the darkening of the light on the stage. So, the scenes do not end abruptly but the light fades gradually so that the stage can be set for the next act. In the First Act of the play, the audience is told about the setting of the King Yayati's inner chamber and the conversation that is taking place between Devayani, Swarnalata, Sharmishtha and Yayati, the four principal characters. It is mentioned that the stage then darkens and then starts the next act. Darkening of stage is required to make the desired changes for the next scene and for the entry and exit of the characters. Lighting illuminates the stage only when it is properly arranged and the characters are in place.

Sometimes lighting is used solely to illuminate the actor's makeup to highlight certain aspects of his personality. Lighting controls makeup to a high degree. Makeup can lose its effectiveness due to incorrect stage lighting. Conversely, skilful lighting can greatly aid the art of makeup. In Act Three of *Yayati* before Chitralekha performs *aarati* of Pooru, it is mentioned that the room is all dark and the faces of the characters cannot be seen. Chitralekha wants to perform Pooru's *aarati* to welcome him as a dutiful wife. The narrator states: "Chitralekha takes the

lamp...the flame casts its light upon his face. His withered features look even more terrifying in the dim light. Chitralekha screams and drops the lamp to the floor" (*Yayati* 57). In this scene, it is the light of the lamp that draws the audience's attention towards Pooru's wife and on the wrinkled and accursed face of Pooru. Chitralekha, who is young and youthful, has been looking forward to the beginning of their newly married life together; the view of his withered and wizened face comes as a shock both to Chitralekha and the audience. This dramatic change in his appearance is highlighted with the help of lighting, which would otherwise have gone unnoticed by the audience.

In the beginning of Act Four, through a scene, it is projected how lights also set the location and time for the day. The act begins with the stage directions: "*Night. There are only a few clay lamps burning; the room is very dimly lit*" (*Yayati* 51). The night scene is accentuated when the maid Swarnalata tells the queen Chitralekha, "I just came to check the oil in the lamps. I thought you might be asleep" (*Yayati* 51). This is followed by the conversation between Chitralekha and the maid Swarnalata in the middle of the night.

Highlighting a particular area on stage, focusing attention on it and diverting from another is best operated by lights. Nothing has colour until light is reflected on it. The impact of colour is also highlighted only through lights. A dull lighted stage would fail to grasp the attention of the audience.

The primary goal of lighting is to help the audience to comprehend the story. Lighting adds to the dramatic mood that gives the audience a sense of place and significant value to the scene. It creates realistic effects and setting of time, whether it is day or night. In Scene Two of *Talé-Daṇḍa*, Kallappa, the King's bodyguard tells King Bijjala about Basavanna, "This morning, Master...They saw Basavanna performed a miracle. That's why these crowds" (*Collected Plays II*: 22). Sometimes lighting is used to complement the scenery with colours and effects and sometimes it

is used to suggest the mood of characters as well. Bright and dull lights or lights of different hues like yellow, red or orange prepare the audience for a sudden change in the situation. In the Tenth Scene, when Mariappa, the king's attendant, stands on Bijjala's shoulders to climb up the skylight, he is able to see a huge group of *sharanas* approaching the palace: "All around the temple of Ravana-Siddheswara...it's saffron ...saffron...saffron" (*Collected Plays II*: 83). Without the colours of the light, a sunrise or sunset can just not be depicted. This is well portrayed in the Tenth Scene mentioned above.

Lighting is a blend of aesthetic and technical creation and creates number of dramatic effects. It makes the stage from intense to exuberant within minutes. Effective lighting completes both the emotional and the literal portrayals of any performance piece, accenting words, music and movement. It can set the mood of a scene and especially the visual messages it conveys. In Act One of *The Fire and the Rain* the stage darkens and the light focuses on another part of the stage that is projected as the hermitage of Raibhya and the scene is described as such, "Vishakha, aged about twenty-six, is filling water in a metal urn. She has scooped out water from holes dug in the wet sand and collected it in the pot" (*Collected Plays II*: 118). Lights can highlight or advance the action onstage while shifting of one scene to another or from one act to another. Lights also reinforce the central visual image to emphasise the message the dramatist is trying to convey. In Act Two the scene is enacted on the dimly lit stage and Paravasu enters in the dark in a black rug. At this his father Raibhya comments, "Who's that? Who's that coming in the dead of the night?" (*Collected Plays II*: 137). After that, Paravasu kills his father Raibhya and then a conversation takes place between the husband and his wife, Paravasu and Vishakha. The light shifts from the conversation of the duo to the part of the stage where the younger brother Arvasu is visible, "The stage darkens on them. We see Aravasu on the tamarind hill talking to himself" (*Collected Plays II*: 143). The action on the stage converges when two brothers meet and Arvasu comes to know about the

murder of their father. Paravasu uses darkness as an excuse for his crime, "In the dark, I – I mistook him for a wild animal" (*Collected Plays II*: 144). This scene recollects Macbeth's murder of king Duncan in the middle of the night in his own castle. Breach of trust is easier in the darkness and plays often portray crimes like these in the darkness of the night.

With the help of lighting effects the audience can direct their attention to the main performer in that particular act. It also plays an important role for shaping the mood in drama. A sunny day projected on stage can be lively and charming whereas a shadowy room can be scary and depressing. The dark set up as in the case of Paravasu's killing of his father Raibhya sets the entire mood for the next act.

Karnad's proficient use of dramatic techniques has made his dramas worth the performance on the stage rather than to be only read. He achieved success in his writings because of good illustration of techniques and its treatment. The use of the techniques – Plot and Subplot, Costumes, Stage combat and Lighting has provided a new dimension to his plays. These technical devices have given layers of meaning to his literary texts that the audience/reader experience when watching or reading a play thus making the story more universal and appealing.

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Chapter Four

Enhancing the Visual and Aural Elements

It is a recorded fact by the Greeks that since ages, India as a nation is famous for its celebrations and festivities. J.W. M'Crindle states what Arrian has written in his *Indica*, "Indians have been peculiarly distinguished among the nations as lovers of dance and song, ever since Dionysus and his attendant Bacchanals made their festive progress through the realms of India" (136). The ancient literary works like Valmiki's *Ramayana*, Vyasa's *Mahabharata*, Bharatmuni's *Nātyaśāstra*, Panini's *Ashtadhyayi* and Kautilya's *Arthashastra* explicate the different styles and modes of folk entertainment and performances in the court.

The Greek philosopher, Aristotle's *Poetics*, a work on the theory of literature has been studied and analysed in great detail by scholars and theorists of drama. It is an important land-mark in the history of literary criticism. It is a comprehensive and systematic work of creative art with rational order and thought-provoking arguments by a learned philosopher and critic. Aristotle propounds theories about creative work that can be applied to all arts – poetry, comedy, tragedy, dancing, painting or sculpture. Aristotle has proposed an ideal methodical structure for plays and with detailed theorisation about the form and function of drama. However, with all the constituent elements of tragedy, the plot has been assigned the greatest significance. Aristotle calls the plot 'the soul of tragedy'. It contains the kernel of the action involving both physical action and mental processes. Aristotle stipulates a beginning, middle and end for the plot which is supposed to follow the unity of time, place and action. Aristotle's theories are still very much valid for their universal principles. Gilbert Murray states in the preface to *Aristotle on the Art of Poetry* (2015): "The book is of permanent value as a mere intellectual achievement; as a store of information about Greek literature; and as an original or first-hand statement of what we may call the classical view of artistic criticism" (n.pag.).

In India, Bharata's *Nātyaśāstra* is considered to be the foundation of the science and techniques of Indian dramaturgy. Both *Nātyaśāstra* and *Poetics* are

factual in nature and are based on the dramatic practices followed in their time period. The first chapter of *Nātyaśāstra* narrates the origin of Sanskrit theatre. The ancient Indian theatre has been classified and studied in two folds – the classical and the folk. Indian and western drama, in spite of having originated from different traditions and diverse mythologies still has an essence of similarity. This similarity exists in various aspects of the plot, characters and actions. Rangacharya states, "The construction of the play from the first episode to the last is a well thought-out procedure, no different from a logical syllogism" (*Introduction* 59). In spite of the diverse cultural variations of their worlds, the works of both Bharata and Aristotle are quite similar. Just as *Nātyaśāstra* devotes importance to the plot and character, Chapter Six of Aristotle's *Poetics* discusses the definition of tragedy which includes plot, character, song and spectacle. Chapter XXXIV of Bharata's *Nātyaśāstra* classifies the characters based on their skills, expertise and mannerisms, thereby dividing them into three types – *Uttama* (Superior), *Madhyama* (Intermediate), and *Adhama* (Inferior). Similarly, Aristotle too distinguishes the three types of characters on the basis of their level of goodness and prosperity.

The distribution of roles is assigned much significance in both the texts. A.B. Keith compares Indian and western drama, "There is no doubt of many parallels between the two theories" (355). The hero (*nāyaka*) of a Sanskrit play is from a royal family, high status and is portrayed as a complete individual similar to Aristotle's tragic hero/heroine. *Sutradhar* who is an important component of Sanskrit plays is equated to the Greek chorus. There are similar characters in both Indian and western dramas, like *vidushaka*, the comedian, seems to be the prototype of the Shakespearean clown. Chandra Rajan in her 'Introduction' to the plays of Kalidasa, is of the view that: "three avenues may be explored for tracing the origins and evolution of Indian drama – Vedas, epics and dance. The Natyashastra claiming a divine origin, 'styles itself as the fifth veda'. It also emphasises the need for pleasure (rasa) to be evoked by the creation of the proper mood" (Rajan 16).

Aristotle's *Poetics* has always been a touchstone when it comes to drama. Any conception of drama in Indo-western culture was always measured with the Aristotelian yardstick, where any change in the usual norm was considered as an aberration. Aristotle's approach to drama was based on Greek tragedies written and enacted in that period. Western drama signified human activity, character and images of man caught in the turmoil of life. On the other hand *Nātyaśāstra* is a treatise on dance and drama with music and poetry being its integral part. The fusion of these elements was a major change from the Aristotelian concepts. Dance and lyrics are also present in Greek drama but they are a separate entity with a definite function thereby allowing the chorus and dramatic elements to retain individual identity. Kantak quotes an example from Nietzsche's essay *The Birth of Tragedy* for western drama: "The dialectical relationship must exist between action and dialogue (the Apollonian element) on the one hand and song and dance of chorus (the Dionysian element) on the other" (20). In Indian dramaturgy, dance and lyric are the vital components of the texture and technique of drama.

Indian drama is a representation of the three worlds – those of gods, demons and men, wherein a man can move out of his natural environment to become a hero. Contrary to this, the Aristotelian notion classifies the characters according to the concept of tragedy and comedy which imitate man in action. Although plot is the common feature of Indian and western dramas but the basic divergence lies in the fact that the plot in *Nātyaśāstra* focuses on the depiction of emotional states while Aristotelian drama represents a view of man's destiny which is crisis-ridden and tests the moral strength and the determination of the protagonist. Poetry is one of the most important elements of narration in Indian drama. It strengthens the drama as it decreases the speed of action thereby allowing the character to display graceful and rhythmic gestures. Bharata states regarding poetry: "One should take good care of words for these are the body of dramatic art (*Nātya*). The gesture, costumes, makeup and temperamental acting merrily clarify the meaning of words" (Kantak 20).

The main generic difference between Western drama when compared to *Nātyaśāstra* was the former's association with masculinity and the latter's allegiance to femininity. While Western drama was more 'action' oriented as it seemed to have originated from Greek mythology, *Nātyaśāstra*, on the other hand, was associated more with 'sentiments' and 'Raas', elements of dance. This Indian treatise conveys the whole essence of drama and traditional beliefs propagated by ancient Indian performers. Scott-James conveys the same for the completeness of Indian drama as it is "An account of composite art of drama, as composed, produced and presented" (57-58). During the last century, many studies have compared Greek and Sanskrit drama and have tried to prove the superiority of one over the other. R.S. Pathak states, "It is more important to examine views of Bharata and Aristotle on certain crucial aspects of nature and structure of the drama with a view to finding out their affinities and differences" (46). Bharata and Aristotle are two stalwarts in Indian and Western contexts that have provided wonderful insights in the world of drama. Despite cultural differences they have considered relatively common issues and their ideas and characters show a unique resemblance, while at the same time present different world-views.

The visual and aural elements of a stage-play form a significant part of the performance. These can be enhanced through the use of techniques like Imagery, Props, Music and Sounds. Karnad's plays: *Bali: The Sacrifice*, *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* and his monologues *Flowers* and *Broken Images* explore the effective use of these devices through which the meaning, the mood, and the setting of the play is enriched.

Karnad's *Bali: The Sacrifice* was published in 2004. It is a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence. The play argues against the custom of offering animal sacrifices to God, considering it as an unethical act. The conflict of two different ideologies and the beliefs of two different sects is presented through

the Queen Mother of Brahminical order, believing in sacrifice, and the Jain principle of non-violence, represented by the Queen. Veena Noble Dass states for Karnad, "For this play he makes use of a Jain myth to reinterpret for his modern audience the dichotomy between thought and deed. The theme of the play deals with marital fidelity and violence" (150). The orthodox and traditional Queen Mother believed in superstitions and in the continuance of the ritual of animal sacrifice.

Against the wishes of his mother, the Hindu King married the Queen, who is a devoted follower of Jainism. Out of love for his wife, the King converts to Jainism. The Queen Mother considers her daughter-in-law a rebel since the latter defies the royal family and its traditions. The Queen develops a fascination towards the Mahout, an elephant-keeper, for his frankness and melodious voice and gets physically involved with him. The King feels devastated when he discovers the Queen's infidelity. He feels divided and vacillates between the beliefs of his mother and his wife, and does not gather enough courage to kill the Mahout and the Queen. He, therefore, plans to offer a sacrifice of a cockerel made of dough to God in order to avoid bloodshed. The underlying belief for this kind of sacrifice is that by doing so he can punish his wife and avoid further evil happenings in the family. The dough cock suddenly becomes alive and the sacrifice of the dough turns into the Queen's sacrifice and she dies. The audience is urged to speculate in the end whether the mock-sacrifice is equivalent to the actual sacrifice and whether artificial violence is as real as actual violence.

Karnad's *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan,* a political play, was published in 2004. It was initially written as a radio-play and later on rewritten and developed for stage performance to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of India's independence. The rewriting of the play highlights its distinguishing elements. Jasbir Jain states: "It is the 'spectacle' which makes the performative play what it is: not the spoken word alone" (33). *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* is based on the story of a Sultan (monarch)

Tipu Sultan who ruled a major part of India from 1782 to 1799. The play is centred on the dreams seen by Tipu Sultan. The plot is introduced by Sultan's loyal employee Kirmani in the play. Tipu Sultan's dreams were taken by him as a prophecy of the harm that was going to be done by hypocrites and evil-doers and by the British as well. These dreams worked as predictions that took shape of reality and inspired him to raise wars against the rebels. The dreams as guides helped him to distinguish and choose between right and wrong. Karnad has recreated history after much research and has delineated the characters with verisimilitude. Tipu's dreams as presented in the play reveal the psychological depth to the protagonist's mind.

Karnad's dramatic monologue *Flowers*, is based on a folktale that originates from Chitradurga in the state of Karnataka. It questions duty and morality and the complexity of human desire. The plot revolves around a pious priest who gets attracted to a courtesan and falls into a relationship with her. He is torn between his duty as a priest towards the king, his love for God (bhakti), his loyalty towards his wife (dharma) and on the other hand, his love for the courtesan Chandravati. The priest shares the story of his life when the matter reaches the head of the temple and the priest's love and duty collide on a single night. By reworking a folk tale, Karnad once again explores the moral dilemmas experienced by individuals and refreshes his play with a contemporary sensibility that embraces the issues of love, loyalty and honour.

Another dramatic monologue by Karnad titled *Broken Images* marks a departure from his earlier practice of borrowing his plots from mythology, history or folk tales. In this monologue he creates a world dominated by the use of technology and expresses it through language. *Broken Images* is set in a TV studio and has a multi-layered theme.

The play highlights the issues of the dominance of English language over other Indian languages especially in literature. It exposes the hollowness of the media which bestows greatness on a work that lies unnoticed in its original language, but when translated into English, becomes the toast of the global literary world. It also deals with the psychological repression of an aspiring author. The story is about a successful Kannada-turned-English writer Manjula, the protagonist who had a handicapped, wheelchair-bound sister, Malini. Disabled Malini not only wins the love of Manjula's husband Pramod but is far more happy and caring than her caretaker sister, Manjula. After her death, it is Manjula who steals Malini's unpublished book and acquires all her fame and success. During a live interview of Manjula on television, the conversation ends with her revelations of her betrayal to her sister when her image just does not leave the monitor. It is not her but her delusion talking to her sister Malini. The conflict is between herself and the image, between her as the writer and the inner truth that emerges on the screen.

Imagery is a writing technique that consists of descriptive language, which helps to create an image and capture the mood of the reader and the audience. It clarifies a concept by immediately helping to draw a picture in the mind according to the kind of setting in which the story takes place. Chris Baldick in *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* defines imagery as: "those uses of language in a literary work that evoke sense-impressions by literal or figurative reference to perceptible or 'concrete' objects , scenes, actions, or states, as distinct from the language of abstract argument or exposition" (164). Imagery can be expressed through major devices like metaphors, similes, personification and hyperbole.

A Metaphor is referred to a word or expression comparing two unlike things. It describes something that is unknown to the reader compared to what he/she already knows. It is taken as an imaginary identity rather than stated directly. For example, In *Bali: The Sacrifice*, the Queen is attracted to Mahout's melodious voice

although she has never seen him before. The Queen tells him, "Your looks don't matter to me. I came here because I heard you sing. You have a heavenly voice" (*Collected Plays1*: 194). Here the reader does not know who the Mahout is but can understand that his divine voice charmed the Queen and she was forced to meet him irrespective of his low caste and ugly appearance. The use of lamps in the temple and torches by the king's people in search of the Queen is both used literally and metaphorically. The exclusion of natural light in itself depicts that the Mahout and Queen's relationship was illicit and unacceptable to society. In the Second Act of *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* the Sultan wants to declare his victory over the British and compares them with a contagious and deadly disease 'plague' and comments: "Muizuddin...call the entire zenana out. Invite them to the ramparts to see the white plague depart" (*Collected Plays II*: 238). The 'image' referred to in the title of *Broken Images* is the electronic image which projects what would happen when instead of interaction with other images, one is forced to confront one's own image. The image becomes the metaphor of the protagonist's mind probing and questioning her till she is forced to admit the truth about herself.

A Simile compares two different things, the known to the unknown. The use of words like 'as' or 'like' are used for connotation. For example, in *Bali: The Sacrifice* when the Mahout is hiding his face from the Queen in the dark and is asked about his looks, he comments, "you haven't seen me properly yet. I am ugly. Ugly as a bandicoot" (*Collected Plays I:* 191). Here the simile is the comparison of the elephant-keeper to a large ugly rat. In another scene of the same play, the elephant-keeper describes the hundred-year-old banyan tree of his village. There is a stone that has been lifted up by the hanging roots of the tree and the villagers worship that stone as their god. He explains it with the use of another simile, using the image of the elephant, a subject he is familiar with: "The roots look like trunks of elephants cradling our God" (*Collected Plays I:* 197).The King and the Queen Mother get suspicious about the Mahout and the Queen who are meeting in the

ruined temple. The Queen decides to leave the temple but the Mahout warns her of the Queen Mother standing outside, "Just standing there. Still. Like a statue" (*Collected Plays I:* 199). The reader can make out that the Queen Mother is waiting for an opportunity to ensnare the Queen and the Mahout together, hence she stands quietly outside the temple.

In *Flowers*, the priest is attracted to the courtesan and explains her beauty as; "I noticed the mole...brilliant eyes...lips like thick petals which rimmed her smile with dark sensuousness" (*Collected Plays II*: 246). He visits the courtesan Ranganayaki's house for the first time and the old woman takes him to Ranganayaki. The priest recalls his experience: "She took the coconut shells...And led me through the cavernous house" (*Collected Plays II*: 247). The house gave him the impression of deep and dark depths. He even refers to his tired wife with the use of descriptive language as, "my wife...fast asleep....She lay there like a wet rag," and further states, "I lightly stepped across the recumbent figure of my wife which woke her up" (*Collected Plays II*: 253). He can discern her fatigue from her eyes, "I thought of my poor wife's bleary eyes" (*Collected Plays II*: 255). The similes used by the priest portray the courtesan as very attractive and beautiful and his wife as dull, tired and unfocused due to lack of sleep.

Personification as explained in *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* is: "figures of speech by which animals, abstract ideas, or inanimate things are referred to as if they were human" (Baldick 254). It is a tool used by the writer/poet to engage the audience emotionally by attributing human characteristics to inanimate objects. In *Flowers*, the time of the priest's visit to Ranganayaki's house has been described as the tranquillity of the night, thus creating a suitable environment for decorating her body with flowers and lovemaking. On Karnad's narrating erotic scenes in his monologue *Flowers*, Sudhir K. Arora states: "Girish Karnad has created an aesthetic sense in the reader who is himself sensuous. But he never loses

control in the depiction. He is restrained and controlled even in using the erotic vocabulary" (224). The scenes narrated with sensual vocabulary by Karnad are sophisticated and refined.

Hyperbole is a figure of speech used for presenting a simple point as a bold exaggerated statement. It is used both informally and formally in conversations as well as in writing. Baldick, in *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* explains it as, "Exaggeration for the sake of emphasis in a figure of speech not meant literally. An everyday example is the complaint 'I've been waiting here for ages'" (161). In the last scene of the play *Broken Images,* when all the images on the screens start speaking loudly together in different languages, it is stated: "The cacophony is deafening" (*Collected Plays II*: 287).

The imagery and figurative language used in Karnad's plays helps the reader to imagine the descriptions of the scenes and characters. The phrases compare one object to the other subtly thus invoking other hidden meanings through the texts. The use of figurative language helps the poets, novelists and playwrights to create an image in the mind of the reader/audience and thus capturing their mood to understand the theme better.

Props are objects or properties or physical things that are commonly used on stage or on-screen performances. Anything that is movable or portable on the stage apart from costumes, sceneries or other equipment is considered a prop. As defined by Chris Baldick, props are "those objects that are necessary to the action of a dramatic work...weapons, documents, cigarettes, items of food and drink, etc." (273). Props bridge the gap between the character and the setting by giving a new dimension and colour to the world within the play. Props can enhance the visual element and the meaning in many ways.

Props indicate the period of time in which a play is set. As in *Bali: The Sacrifice* props like lamps and torches are the vital elements necessary to the action when the king goes in search of her queen to the ruined temple along with his soldiers. This depicts the time period of the ninth or the tenth century when there was no electricity but people made use of fire-lamps and firelight torches (*mashaal*) at night. Aparna Bhargava Dharwadker in the introduction to a volume of Karnad's playsstates, "Like *Hayavadana*, *Bali* has a specific pre-modern source – the thirteenth-century Kannada epic, *Yashodhara charite*, which can in turn be traced back to two eleventh-and ninth-century-Sanskrit epics" ("Introduction," *Collected Plays I* : xxxiii). Karnad also makes use of the age-old myth of using a cock made of dough as a substitute to something or someone so as to bring magical effects in some desired work. In his preface to *Bali: The Sacrifice*, he states, "I first came across the myth of the Cock of Dough when I was still in my teens....the myth continued to reveal unexpected meanings with passing years" (*Two Plays* 70).

Props serve different purpose and roles. They can help the reader to identify a set or location where a particular scene is held. In *Bali: The Sacrifice*, the ruined temple scene is indicated through the use of related props and is described as: "*The inner sanctum of a ruined temple. The pedestal on which deity once stood is still intact....In front of the pedestal is a low stone platform, meant for flowers, myrrh and other ingredients of worship*" (*Two Plays* 73). In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*, Mackenzie's visit to the house of the famous historian and scholar Kirmani is described as: "he looks around at the notes, books and manuscripts littering the floor. Kirmani enters with a jug of water and a tumbler, and places them next to Mackenzie" (*Two Plays* 7). The props mentioned in the play create the image of Kirmani as an enthusiastic scholar and Mackenzie as a guest at his residence. In *Broken Images*, a big plasma screen, telly-table, chairs, TV and microphone have been used as props, which create the environment of a television studio for the

interview to be given by the protagonist Manjula Nayak in the play. Props give clues to the audience about the time and place of the action that is dramatized in the play.

The occupation of the characters can also be depicted through the proper use of props. In *Bali: The Sacrifice* when there is a knock at the temple door and the Mahout and the Queen are afraid of being caught red-handed, it is narrated as: "*The Mahout opens the door and raises the stick to hit out. He sees the king and freezes*" (*Two Plays* 86).Here the use of the stick as a prop tells the audience more about the Mahout's profession where an elephant-keeper usually carries a stick to tame or control elephants. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan,* the king's use of belt and sword as a part of his attire and torch is another example of props that indicate his position and status. In *Flowers,* the use of *Shiv linga* (an iconic representation of a Hindu God) as a prop represents the priest as a strong worshipper of the deity Lord Shiva and is symbolic of power and high energy. The priest states, "I spend most of my time with the *linga* – talking to it singing to it...I have often lost track of the hours devising new ways of covering it with flowers. 'The linga is my step-wife,' grumbles my wife" (*Collected Plays II*: 244).

Some significant occasions are emphasized with the use of props. In *Bali: The Sacrifice,* the use of props like silver plates and incense sticks for worship by the Queen Mother and the use of swords in wars and for sacrifice is portrayed. A scene in the King's courtyard runs parallel to another scene of a conversation between the Mahout and the Queen in the temple who are discussing their fear of being caught red-handed by the King and the Queen Mother. It is narrated as, "*The Queen mother enters the courtyard. She has a large silver tray in her hands and on it an object; about two foot high, covered by a saffron cloth. There are flowers, incense sticks etc. in the tray, and a sword*" (*Two Plays* 80).An inanimate cock made of dough is used as a prop for offering as a substitute of the Queen. The King states, "This is the offering. A sacrifice of dough. A substitute for a live fowl" (*Two Plays*

110). In *Flowers* the priest tells why the canon is related to the arrival of the Chieftain. He states, "Everyday, at sunset, the canon goes off on the ramparts, announcing that the Chieftain has set off from home for the temple." He further states, "That gives me a full hour to get ready for the pooja. My wife attends to the basic ritual requirements such as jaw sticks and camphor and the placement of wicks in different silver plates for the *aarati*" (*Collected Plays II*: 244). The props including the canon and the silver plates represent the priest as dutiful and devoted towards his temple. The props help in creating an appropriate atmosphere and setting the tone for a particular act.

Some important event scan be shared with the audience with the use of props like writing or finding a letter or a diary. Some crucial moments that act as a central part of the play are depicted through such props. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*, Kirmani, Sultan's courtier-cum-biographer, tells about the Sultan to Mackenzie who is an army officer in British East India Company, "The Sultan washed his fingers and got up...took out an envelope from his pocket, sealed it and gave it to me." He further tells to Mackenzie, "I broke open the seal. Inside was a paper on which he had recorded the dream he had the previous night. His last dream" (*Two Plays* 9). The theme of the play revolves around the diary written by Tipu Sultan that has an account of his most significant dreams and their interpretations. Kirmani further states, "It was a diary in which my master had recorded his dreams. He had kepi it concealed from his closest friends" (*Two Plays* 17).Employing these props effectively helps in communicating the plot to the audience as well as to the other characters in the play. Excluding such props from the play is like missing some crucial moments of the play.

A character's status and personality is also illustrated with the use of props which should be practically usable. In *Bali: The Sacrifice* the description of the lamp is used to help the Queen to have a glimpse of the Mahout she has never seen before.

At this point the Mahout asks, "When you came in here, the lamp was burning, you saw my face?" (*Two Plays* 77). In an act when it is disclosed that Queen was with the Mahout in the ruined temple, the Queen Mother signals the King to accept the sword and sacrifice the Queen for committing the heinous crime of infidelity. The sword as prop symbolizes the authority of the king: "He takes the sword from the tray, ties it round his belt, picks up the torch and walk up the steps" (*Two Plays* 85). In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*, when Mackenzie, along with other British soldiers tries to find the dead body of Tipu Sultan among the dozen corpses with the help of the torches and the flares, he comments: "I think we've found him. Careful. That one with the gold buckle on his belt. Lift him out" (*Two Plays*14). The belt with the golden buckle as a prop here distinguishes the King from other dead bodies. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* Tipu is described in Act Two: "He takes out a string of beads and starts reciting a Sufi Zikr – incantation – to himself. He begins to sway as in a trance" (*Two Plays* 50). The use of the string of beads as a prop during prayer and the reference to the Sufi Zikr projects the Sultan as a devoted follower of Islam.

Props are important in theatre, and like other techniques, necessary to complete the action. They are the vital elements that give a clear insight to the audience about the situation and characters. The props can also be categorised as Hand Props and Set Prop**s.** Hand Props are carried by the characters participating in the play. They help define the specific attributes of the actor during the performance. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*, props such as plates, toys, thermometer are used by different characters according to their assigned roles. In *Flowers*, camphor, coconut, wicks, silver plates used while performing the *aarati* in the temple have been included as hand props to make the scene more realistic and believable. In *Broken Images*, the ear piece, papers and typescript has been used. Set props are the props which are placed on the set to enhance the performance. In *Flowers* the use of set props like *linga*, mat, silver water pot is used to show them in relation to the stage setting. In *Broken Images*, props like chair, telly-table, wheel chair, and television

screen are used. Such settings with the use of set props are often verbally communicated by the narrator. Sometimes the props used for rehearsals are different from the original ones to be used on stage as they might be expensive or delicate. Therefore, props can be mimed to make the scene realistic and believable.

Human beings have a strong relationship with **music**, as it is an audible and rhythmic way of expressing emotional states, feelings and thoughts. It makes the scenes and interludes of the play more effective by changing the atmosphere, thus helping the audience to connect with the play better. Music is an intrinsic feature of drama. It creates the mood and the atmosphere that evokes the desired emotions in the audience, as Lewis Gardner states: "The trouble with life is that, unlike movies, it doesn't have background music. We never know how we're supposed to feel." Sometimes, in theatrical performances the communication is through the combined form of songs/poem, dialogues and dances as an integrated whole. Music has been coupled with drama for centuries, and its role remains quite complex. From early ballads and epic poems with simple musical accompaniment to the increasingly intricate sound effects of modern film, music can enhance drama in a variety of ways. Music is a powerful aid that communicates the hidden depths of the characters' minds and their emotions to the audience, sometimes even dialogues cannot do that.

Music is an interpretive art that can stir emotions and compel the attention of the audience. Music on stage can be produced through instruments or in the form of songs. In both the tragedies and comedies of Greek drama of the fifth century BC, the odes were sung in between the scenes by the chorus or the narrator. In the late sixteenth century, from Renaissance till date, it took the form of operas, thus reviving the technique of ancient Greek dramas. Even the Indian folk theatres deployed music, songs and dances. Music can convey messages meaningfully especially in plays focusing on social issues. Music was employed effectively in

plays by Kurt Julian Weill, a leading German-born American composer of the early twentieth century, who was best known for his fruitful collaborations with Bertolt Brecht, the German playwright. A socialist by nature, Weill believed that music should serve a social cause. His compositions served a socially useful purpose as he wrote for the concert hall, as well as several Judaism-themed pieces during the Second World War. His best-known work with Brecht is *The Threepenny Opera* (1928). It included the famous ballad 'Mack the Knife' composed by Kurt Julian Weill and lyrics by Brecht. The English translation of the song became a popular hit in the United States and the United Kingdom in 1959. He composed another famous score of *Johnny Johnson*, Paul Green's play. He became a citizen of the United States in 1943. Weill states, "Our task was to bind speech and music into perfect fusion, to have the score an integral part of the play, so that the action would be more perfectly communicated and dramatically heightened by the power of music" Kurt Julian Weill believed that not only decorative images or backgrounds are indispensable as theatrical techniques but music also has a deep impact on the audience. He composed music for the plays based on Old Testament. He states, "I attempted to create music of the same mood that would communicate naturally and inevitably the stories of the Old Testament" (n.pag.).

Music is a powerful medium that facilitates communication which is beyond words. Music has therapeutic affect and stimulates certain human responses like alleviating the mood, reducing stress, bringing out emotions, highlighting physiological and cognitive behaviour. Adya Rangacharya in his translation of *The Nātyaśāstra* has also mentioned the different types of musical instruments and songs used during a dramatic performance. Chapter XXVIII to XXX mention the types of instruments – stringed (*vĭnā*), covered (drums), solid (cymbals) and hollow (flute) instruments. Chapter XXXI discusses the rules of *Tāla* that includes seven types of songs like a song of one sentence (*Kulaka*), a song with different sentences (*Chedyaka*), and others. It explains how the talent of a singer and a musician affects the theatrical

performance. Rangacharya states, “Good qualities add grace to songs, faults bring about contempt. Hence, one should know about good qualities and faults.” He further adds on, “In general, by nature women are more suited to music and men to recitation. A women’s voice is soft from birth, while man’s is gruff....The singing of women and recitation by men are naturally successful” (296).

Karnad’s *Bali*: *The Sacrifice* opens up with the Queen’s rhyming words depicting two different religious sects – one that believes in sacrifice and violence, that of the King and the other of the Queen, who is a Jain and believes in non-violence. “As the world is divided...into two realms – one of the spirits that adore the blood and gore...and the other ruled by the spirits that bid you pause” (*Two Plays* 73). The most evident driving force of the plot is its musical feature – the musical songs and the melodious voice of the Mahout, which attracts the Queen. The Queen is caught with the Mahout in the temple, then the King and the Queen stand still looking at each other as if not knowing how to react. It is the Singer then, who takes the audience to the past scene of the King and the Queen when they were young. He sings, “Memories slide meld and fuse. Discrete moments get flung together strung in a single moment” (*Two Plays* 89). The Singer then brings the audience back to the temple scene, the King and the Queen are older again, by singing the same lines ending up with, “Then the moment distends, spreads into years” (*Two Plays* 93). Music may add many significant elements to the drama. Music in between two scenes keeps the audience involved, while the director gets the time to change the set for the next scene. The role of the music/singer in *Bali*: *The Sacrifice* helps to communicate the warm relationship of the King and the Queen in the past and also helps the audience to experience their present emotional turmoil.

In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*, the Sultan’s sons go to Lord Cornwallis and to the British to learn their language for a few months. There is music of celebration and cheering when Tipu Sultan is with Mir Sadiq and Kirmani and the two boys are

leaving. It is stated in the stage directions of the play, "*Music. Cheering. Celebrations. A salute of guns. Diwan-e-aam. Tipu with Kirmani, Poornaiya and Mir Sadiq*" (*Two Plays* 47). Kirmani narrates the scene of their warm welcome to the Sultan: "A battalion of Bengal Sepoys formed a guard of honour as the princes moved down the English lines. Arms were presented, drums were beaten" (*Two Plays* 48). It also runs in the background to indicate the arrival or departure of the Sultan. Music can illustrate or tell a story, narrate a scene, depict the character and can encourage certain emotional reactions in the audience. Music is one of the intrinsic features of Karnad's plays. It syncs well with the plot and other elements of drama. In *Flowers*, the musical sound of the temple bells during *aarati* and the priest singing to the *Shiva linga* transports the audience to the setting of a temple. The priest tells: "And in the isolation of this place, I spend most of my time with the *linga* – talking to it, singing to it, even discussing recent political developments, and most of all, decorating it with flowers" (*Collected Plays II*: 243). Music may include both spoken dialogues and songs as well. It serves where no other theatrical element can replace it. The dramatic visual imagery is governed and presented through theatrical music. Its function can be varied depending on the requirements of the plot.

Playwrights make use of a wide variety of **sounds** in complex combinations with the dialogues spoken by the actors. These sound effects create life-like noises to support the situation being portrayed. This technique is generally used to establish location, weather and time of day or something happening onstage or offstage. It provides information about the characters' moods and the transition of scenes. With variation in properties of sounds like – pitch, volume, quality and duration, a unique effect is created every time. Sounds like music evoke emotions and reflect various moods. In ancient Japan, theatrical events called Kagura were performed in Shinto shrines with music and dance. Music and sound effects were produced offstage in Elizabethan drama. Instruments like bells, whistles and horns were used for sound effects and played at the appropriate time of enactment. The Italian composer Luigi

Russolo built mechanical sound-making devices, called 'intonarumori' for futurist theatrical and musical performances around 1913. These devices were meant to stimulate natural and man-made sounds, such as trains and bombs. Luigi Russolo's treatise *The Art of Noises* (1913) is one of the earliest written documents on the use of abstract noise in the theatre. After his death, his 'intonarumori' were used in conventional theatre performances to create realistic sound effects. The innovation of the World Wide Web has made different kinds of sounds more realistic and accessible to sound composers and stage directors.

Artificially produced sounds for theatre give realistic effects to theatre, movies, radio and television. Sounds like that of breeze, wind, storm, smashing of wood, glass, the speeding train, are quite often used during the production of the plays.

In *Bali: The Sacrifice,* the moaning of the Queen depicts the sound of a scuffle between the Mahout and Queen. In another scene the Mahout tells the Queen to pant heavily so that the King's men leave them alone in the temple. The Mahout tells her: "Don't panic. Do as I say. Do as I tell you... Just laugh. Be merry. Come on....Yes, yes, pant. Heavy breathing. You and me – (*He pants heavily.*) Let them think something is going on... (*He demonstrates panting.*) Hunnh... Hunnh...Yes. Like that. Come on" (*Two Plays* 85). In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* the salute of guns is used to convey the celebrations for the Sultan. Soldiers running and enemies approaching are depicted by the sounds of footsteps. Another example of use of the sounds is the wailing noises that indicate the death of the Sultan. The use of sounds helps in creating aural effects that complement the plot. The role of sounds is determined by certain aesthetic decisions. They add to the actions and events, and suggest when and where the story is taking place.

Indian playwrights of the late twentieth century have adopted, experimented and given new meanings to the forms, styles and techniques of western theatre. Karnad ventured into this field and formed his own oeuvre of themes, stage

techniques and performances for theatre. Savita Goel states, "The stylized new theatre of Karnad uses music chants, verbal sounds and rhythmic syllables to multiply the staging signs and maximise their impact" (355). Karnad's two short dramatic monologues – *Flowers* and *Broken Images* are different in form and deal with the two different subjects of identity crisis in post-independent India. Karnad explores the character's emotional as well as intellectual dimension that is struggling for its recognition with the self and with the society.

In *Flowers*, the arrival of the Chieftain in the temple coincides with the sounds of the canon and allows the priest to prepare for the pooja. In another scene where the priest enters Ranganayaki's house, he knocks the closed door that depicts her privacy. The priest states, "It was dark, but it took no effort to be at her door. I knocked" (*Collected Plays II*: 246). Godugunuri Prasad states, "In *Flowers*, Girish Karnad returns to the world of folklore. It is the first work in this genre to focus on male rather than female desire. In this monologue, Karnad presents the dichotomy between 'love and duty'" (242). The priest's wife waits for him till late for food and as soon as she hears the sound of splashing water, she starts to heat up the food for him. The priest narrates, "As soon as she heard me splashing in the tank, she would start heating up the food" (*Collected Plays II*: 251).In *Flowers*, Karnad once again returns to Indian history and myth and the echoes of sexuality as it was in *Naga-Mandala* and the search for self as in *Hayavadana*. In *Flowers*, a Brahmin priest is torn between his love for the courtesan and his religious duty towards God and the temple. He feels torn between his duties as a husband and his lust for the mistress. Jasbir Jain appreciates the play both for its dramatic technique as well as for the complex issues that it raises. She states, "The essence of *Flowers* as presenting the drama of life, lies not merely in its structure or in the tempora-spatial conjunctions but in the compressed narrative of transformation, change, questioning and the complexity of the human mind as it fluctuates between desire and power, sacrifice

and self-fulfilment in order to hold on to some meaning in life." Jain continues: "These features would ensure that Karnad's *Flowers* will not fade but be an effervescent addition to the tradition of Indian theatre" (357).

Karnad'smonologue *Broken Images* indirectly criticises the Indian English writers for not using the native language in their literary writings. The TV image reveals many hidden facts like the protagonist Manjula's strained relationship with her husband and her sister Malini and the circumstances which made her claim her sister's novel as her own. Manjula plagiarises the novel but defiantly shouts: "I wrote the novel in English because it burst out in English....What baffles me – actually, let me confess, hurts me – is why our intellectuals can't grasp this simple fact!" (*Collected Plays II: 264*) Manjula Nayak is subjected to an interrogation that mocks, taunts, provokes and finally strips the secrets from her soul. She feels shattered when her deceptions are unravelled to the whole world. In Karnad's *Broken Images*, the use of sounds assists the audience in a number of ways. Towards the end of the play when the protagonist Manjula Nayak's plagiarism is exposed, her anger, frustration and chaos in the mind is projected through the noise produced by all the screens when the interview is over. It is stated, "Suddenly all the screens start speaking loudly, some in Kannada, the others in English. The cacophony is deafening" (*Collected Plays II*: 287). The play presents the conflict between authenticity and duplicity through Manjula Nayak who raises the question of the importance of English language as a medium of creative expression as compared to other regional languages. The discussion about the politics of language has been in vogue since Independence. The Indian writers in English language justify its use whereas writers of regional languages condemn it.

Karnad, a modern playwright, comes before the audience as an innovator of "deconstructing myths. He takes up mythical and legendary tales from his own culture and unfolds them in the light of modern sensibility. This deconstructing of

myth becomes an act of self-searching for the playwright...he combines the past and the present into a unity that bespeaks of tradition and modernity in his art of playwriting." (Gill 8). Karnad upholds the cultural heritage of India in his plays and writes differently from the legacy of colonialism. Subjects taken by him from mythology and folklore are effectively reinterpreted in the contemporary context and according to the present cultural values.

Karnad refashions theatrical techniques to suit the structural framework of his plays. The technique of bringing together the contemporaneous with the past, the traditional with the modern, is his forte. Tasleem A. War states, "Karnad's use of techniques and devices used from Sanskrit play, Company *Nataks*, Parsi theatre, *Yakshagana*, *Bayalala*, have helped him to bridge the gap between the actor and the audience as is typical of traditional performances" (5). Karnad inherits a rich legacy of art, tradition and culture and it is displayed with his concern for the marginalised, caste or gendered subalterns and making them as a central theme of his plays.

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Chapter Five

Towards a Modernist Poetics

Modern Indian theatre evolved with the socio-political development in India during and after British Raj. The colonial span of more than a hundred years (1773-1947) exposed the Indian theatre more closely to the western styles. Aiming to familiarize the British residents with the Indian culture, the new theatre replicated western plots in the Indian context. Seeds of modern Indian theatre were sown at that time and the result was a blend of eastern and western culture in the themes, dramatic techniques and stage presentation of the plays. There was a remarkable change in the development of writing and enactment in the Indian theatre. Modern Indian theatre began when the stories about the lives of heroes, Gods and celestial beings were replaced with the episodes in the life of a common man, the day-to-day challenges faced by them, their fears and tears. This chapter examines the modernist trend in Indian Writing in English, especially Indian drama, during the mid-twentieth century when writers moved away from the conventions of realist and naturalist writing and explored new devices and techniques to represent a more individualistic view of the world.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Calcutta and Madras started their 'Brand Theatres'. They are still reckoned as the pioneers of modern Indian drama and theatre based on the London models. There was a transformation in the genre of the drama not only at the socio-political and economic level but also in its artistic and cultural aspects. Indian drama and theatre also went through a change which not only altered the traditional aspects of 'roopaka' (visual aspects of drama) and 'natya' (dramatic representation) as propounded by Bharata Muni in the *Nātyaśāstra*, but at the same time added a whole fresh enunciation to the theatrical and narrative forms. The overdramatic aspects were rationalized. The themes also witnessed a change and for the first time, the ardent fervour of the religious and historical elements and of the mythological aspects, was toned down. Therefore, the change in traditional theatre was felt in a quite distinct way.

With the passage of time, more and more theatre enthusiasts started participating in Indian theatre in varied ways. They came up with new story-lines, new ideas, and new rules for enactment and stage techniques. The modern Indian theatre further evolved in the beginning of the twentieth century and especially during World War I. It became more commercialised and within a small span of time it had made its place from the streets to the auditorium. In 1922, the Communist Party of India was founded and with this entered the India People's Theatre Association (IPTA), which served as its cultural wing. Many talented middle-class people joined IPTA in Bengal and Bombay with a dream of a classical society – a society comprising of elite and educated individuals. They brought the idea of the portable theatre which was based on various political agenda and was classified as anti-fascist. The formation of IPTA turned a new page in the history of Indian theatre and supported the modern Indian theatre in taking a leap further. One of the founders of IPTA Calcutta, Bijan Bhattacharya, wrote the play *Nabanna* (New Harvest) and *Zabanbandi* based on the exploitation of the peasants during the Bengal famine. Another play on the same theme *Bhukha Hai Bengal* was produced by the Calcutta troupe and many such other plays were written as a radical outburst after the Bengal famine. Subsequently, songs and dances became a part of the modern Indian theatre and thus dancers like Shanti Vardhan, Narendra Sharma and even talented musicians like Ravi Shankar joined the IPTA central troupe. Many other theatrical groups grew out of IPTA in the post-independence era. Some of them are Safdar Hashmi's 'Janam' (1973-89) in Delhi, Badal Sircar's 'Satabdi' (Calcutta) and R.P. Prasanna's 'Samudaya' (Karnataka, 1975 to mid-1980s).

The post-independence phase constituted a major transformation in literature as writers drew from life and presented the social reality around them. Themes about the search for beauty in man and nature of the 1920s and 30s were supplanted by a preoccupation with themes like the meaning of life, cultural traditions, and the human values of freedom, idealism, and morality. Stories of God were replaced by a

depiction of the challenges faced by a common man. Consequently, the literature of this period appealed not only to the higher classes but also to the masses due to its simplicity and directness. During the 1950s after independence, the horrors of partition disillusioned the people, and writers reacted against the political and social turbulence by focusing on the disintegration of society and the loss of India's cultural heritage. The entire genre of drama and fiction changed socio-culturally as the traditional, idealistic view of life was replaced by a concern with the socio-economic conditions of society.

Modern Indian theatre then came with the Marxist version of consciousness that was portrayed in the plays of Utpal Dutt. He became a pioneering figure in modern Indian theatre, when he founded the 'Little Theatre Group' in 1947, which enacted many English, Shakespearean and Brechtian plays, in a period now known as the epic theatre period, before immersing itself completely in highly political and radical theatre. His plays became an apt vehicle of the expression for his Marxist ideologies, visible in the socio-political plays like *Kallol* (1965), *Manusher Adhikar*, *Louha Manob* (1964), *Tiner Tolowar* (2005) and *Maha-Bidroha* (1980). He showed an abiding interest in the popular Bengali folk theatre form of 'yatra' to reach out to the masses. It originated during the sixteenth century with the rise of *Vaishnavism*, the *Bhakti movement*, especially *Krishnaism*. Anuparna Mukherjee in her article states, "In his forceful defence of Yatra *In Search of Form*, Dutt praises 'jatra' (*yatra*) for having the potentials for a revolutionary theatre" (191). Dutt himself experimented with the form in 'yatra-plays' as he calls them, like *Sanyasir Tarabari* (*The Crusade*), *Tutu Meer* and the critically acclaimed *Tiner Toloar* (*The Tin Sword*). He even ventured into a direction of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in the *Yatra* style.

Like Dutt, several of his contemporaries were experimenting with different ingredients of Sanskrit as well as folk theatre by incorporating masks, mime, half-

curtains, dance and music in their plays. These plays dealt with diverse subjects and belonged to different genres (plays such as *Hayavadana*, *Ghasiram Kotwal* or *Charandas Chor*, to name a few). Devina Dutt states, "This was a time when varied plays were being written and staged in different parts of the country with exciting linguistic manoeuvres and transfers from one region to another" (*The Hindu* 2+). Nonetheless one must acknowledge that even before the *Roots Movement* (exemplified by the post-colonial Indian playwrights returning to classical dance, Sanskrit aesthetic stories, or religious rituals as their roots to define Indian theatre), the Leftist Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), out of their interest in the various living traditions in folk culture, explored many of these ethnic performative traditions by weaving them into their theatrical presentations. The pre-independence era saw some stalwarts like Rabindranath Tagore, Shri Aurobindo, T.P. Kailasam, Lobo-Prabhu, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya and Bharati Sarabhi. These dramatists contributed immensely to the evolution and development of Indian English drama. Yogita Bajaj and Sangita Mehta in their article state, "Indian drama got a new footing when Kendriya Natak Sangeet Akademi was started in January 1953. National School of Drama in 1959 was another development. In the 1960 by suitable mixing of various styles and techniques from Sanskrit [and] western theatre, the modern Indian theatre was given a new, versatile and broader approach at every level of creativity" (151).

In January 1953, Sangeet Natak Akademi was set up which gave a platform to aspiring dramatists and actors. Thus drama got a new footing in India. Later, Ebrahim Alkazi headed the newly founded National School of Drama and worked for the growth of modern Indian theatre. The theatre during the mid-twentieth century in India was steeped in various styles and techniques from Sanskrit and from western theatre, and revealed a broader approach at every level of creativity.

In the year 1972, the vernacular theatre of contemporary India got a new rise. Vijay Tendulkar's Marathi play *Ghashiram Kotwal* used traditional folk forms in modern theatre. The Hindi theatre got its stronghold in Calcutta in 1976 when Usha Ganguly and her husband Kamal Ganguly launched a theatre group named 'Ranga Karmee'. The first Indian to earn international recognition in the field of theatre was Manjula Padmanabhan with her play, *Harvest* (1997), which dealt with the exploitation of the human body in the contemporary society. Mahesh Dattani, another contemporary playwright, wrote *Do the needful* for the BBC and received the Sahitya Akademi award for his play *Final Solutions* based on the issue of communalism.

In the regional plays in India, Bengali, Marathi and Tamil were initially the medium of expression. However, in the late twentieth century, Gujarati, Kannada, Hindi, Oriya, Urdu and English drama added another wing to modern Indian drama. Furthermore it is with the introduction of '*nukkad natak*' or the street drama, that modern Indian drama actually broke the barriers of stage, orchestra, pits and gallery while reaching the hearts of the common people. Karnad writes in the preface to *Two Plays*, "In Karnataka, Tipu has continued to inspire folk ballads and I have, in my life time, seen three Kannad stage versions of his life, two of them by itinerant troupes of rural actors" (3).

Modern Indian theatre was an amalgamation of art, dance, music and dialogues, and thus was a means of reaching people and addressing their issues. It was also a significant means of identifying and drawing attention to the social and political scenario of independent India. One of theatre's greatest periods continues today. The industrial-technological revolution, democratic and intellectual revolution that disrupted earlier beliefs about time, space, human psychology and God influenced the art and culture of the modern period in India. Consequently, experimentations in the Indian theatre and other artistic fields took place during the mid-twentieth century.

The dormant forms of indigenous literature and performing arts in India gradually revived. Sangeet Natak Akademi thus became one of the chief promoters of old theatre forms like *Yakshagana*, *Tamasha*, *Ras Lila*, and *Nautanki*. This led the urban as well as the western scholars to be interested in the traditions of India and thus intellectual interest in folk theatre developed in the cities in late fifties and early sixties. The emergence of Indian folk theatre increased the sense of rural-urban cultural dichotomy among the elite. Badal Sircar, the noted Bengali playwright, expressed this clearly, "The city theatre today is not a natural development of the traditional or folk theatre in the urban setting as it should have been. It is rather a new theatre having its base on Western theatre….whereas the traditional village theatre has retained most of its indigenous characteristics" (1-2). This not only led to an era wherein the dramatists attempted using the folk theatre but there were those who altogether rejected the western forms for the village culture and traditions. As Karnad revived the myth of Yavakri from the *Mahabharata* in his plot *The Fire and the Rain*, he explained that this apparently peripheral tale had almost been lost in the mighty epic. Karnad states, "I have met Sanskrit scholars who were unaware of the existence of the myth: it is easy to lose track of a short narrative like this in the tangled undergrowth that covers the floor of that epic" (*The Fire and the Rain* ix). The Urdu playwright Habib Tanvir stated, "It is in its villages that the dramatic tradition of India in all its pristine glory and vitality remains preserved even to this day. It is these rural drama groups that require real encouragement." He further states, "It is not until the city youth is fully exposed to the influence of folk traditions in theatre that a truly Indian theatre, modern and universal in appeal and indigenous in form, can really be evolved" (6).

Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Badal Sircar are some of the well-known dramatists who have experimented with folk forms. Tendulkar's Marathi play *Sari Ga Sari*, first produced in Bombay in 1964, was based on the Tamasha form and its language patterns. Although the play had all the conventional

components like *gan* (invocation to Ganapati), *Gaulan* (scene between Krishna and the milkmaids), and *Povadd* (a song form), characters such as Mukunda (Krishna) satirized urban life. The major difference between the urban and rural folk theatre lay in the skill of the rural actors who could improvise according to the situation whereas the urban actors were rigid and depended mainly upon the playwright and the director.

Badal Sircar was a pioneer in folk and Bengali theatre and founded his own theatre company Shatabdi in 1976. He went on to write more than fifty plays of which *Evam Indrajit*, *Basi Khabar*, and *Saari Raat* are well-known literary pieces. In his early days he worked mainly on comedies which gained him popularity but it was his angst-ridden *Evam Indrajit* that became a landmark in Indian theatre. Sircar's name is synonymous with playwriting in Bengali, just as Vijay Tendulkar in Marathi, Mohan Rakesh in Hindi, and Girish Karnad in Kannada; but Sircar remains one of the most translated Indian playwrights.

During the twentieth century, theatre underwent a period of great upheaval. The initiation of modern theatre in India was done by British East India Company whose roots were in the three ports of India – Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai. These were then the seats of the British Empire. It was under the direct influence of the western philosophy and modes of thought and behaviour. The theatres were revived mainly for the entertainment of the British gentry. It was an extension to their club life. Gradually, the British communities started to introduce English drama as a part of Indian theatre by enacting and producing it. English drama then spread its roots as it also became an important part of university teaching. This led to the urban middle class abandoning their own Indian classical theatre and getting inclined towards western drama. The local Indian aristocrats and intellectuals were initially debarred from attending these theatres.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the feeling of patriotism along with the pride in the glorious past of the country and also western literature influenced Indian literature and drama. All this led to the development of modern theatre in Bombay (1820) in the form of Bombay Amateur Theatre 'society', IPTA (1942), Sahitya Natak Akademi (1953), National School of Drama (1959) and many more contemporary theatres with multiple streams. Utapal K. Banerjee in the foreword to *Indian Theatre in 21st Century* states, "In the 1960s, by suitably mixing various styles and techniques from Sanskrit, medieval folk and western theatre, the modern Indian theatre was given a new, versatile and broader approach at every level of creativity" (n.pag.). In the preface to *Two Plays* Karnad explains that he was commissioned by the BBC in 1996 to celebrate fifty years of Indian Independence. Since the play was meant to commemorate India's freedom from the British rule, Karnad explored for an appropriate subject that could be represented in his play. He states, "The plot obviously had to deal with some aspect of Indo-British relations and I immediately thought of Tipu Sultan, one of the most politically perceptive and tragic figures in modern Indian history" (3).

The term 'Modern' not only describes contemporary reality as compared to traditions of the past but it also helps in designating a particular period of time in the historical context. It underlines how the present is different from the previous epoch. As Gunter Berghaus has stated, "What was modern yesterday becomes tradition today, and the cycle of eternal returns compels each generation into going beyond the achievements of their ancestors" (1). Thus a period was considered modern when it contained a large number of innovative features that produced a substantial and far-reaching break with the past.

The Renaissance (1500-1789) prepared the ground for the modern age. There was a spurt of industrial growth, economic development, trade and commerce, and development of new towns. The term modern in art and literature meant a conscious

desire to overturn traditional modes of representation and express new sensibilities of time.

The whole essence of modernist art and writing was to clean the slate of the past and initiate a new art form for the future. Modernist works often express a sense of urban culture change, along with an awareness of new psychological theories which are inclined towards techniques of juxtaposition and multiple points of view. The novelist Franz Kafka, Luigi Pirandello and Bertolt Brecht were some of the first writers to abandon the conventional forms and open up the theatre to new forms of abstraction.

Modernism as a movement in the early twentieth century involved a rejection and a questioning of the conventions of Realism. It was a philosophic and artistic response to the realist and rational view of life and supported the use of modern techniques which would represent the contemporary age more closely. Long standing theatrical forms like Naturalism and Realism and their consensus between author and reader was challenged and it paved the way for a new type of modern theatre. Expressionism, Surrealism, Symbolism, and Experimental theatre were reflections of the modernist perspective in art and culture. Modernists used new forms of communication, broke up the conventional time-space nexus, and desired to express new experiences and the spirit of modernity with help of new methods. This brought about radical changes in all the spheres of social life, like urban growth, break-up of social ties and secularization, etc. There was a rapid transformation in society and everyday life that gave rise to new cultural attitudes. It rejected traditions and customary conventions of the past and took a positive step towards new narratives and individual and universal liberation.

The hybridity of the traditional and the modern theatres has led to major changes in the form and thematic focus of dramatic works. Kevin J. Wetmore states, “Modern drama and theatre are the result of specific cultural forces at work, both

individually and collectively, consciously and unconsciously. Modern Asian theatre and drama developed as a result of contact with the West during the early modern period (1500-1900)" (2). Most of the western dramas are a result of the adaptation of the ancient Greek theatre whereas the modern Asian dramas, as a result of colonisation, are a fusion of Western models and traditional culture. Some critics are of the belief that every literary work is based on another pre-existing work, and carries the echoes of its procreator. For Graham Allen, "Works of literature, after all, are built from systems, codes, and traditions established by previous works of literature" (1). Each nation developed its own modern drama as a result of its unique history and culture that was influenced by the great works of the past.

Contemporary Indian theatre had three most important forms of textual exchange, viz. translation, transculturation and intertextuality. Translation in simpler terms meant interpretation of literature in one's regional language which was possible due to the common origin of languages and their interrelated nature. (Dharwadker 357-61). So while the major aspects of any piece of dramatic work could be translated into another language, the subtle nuances of the original version could not be substituted into the other. Roman Jakobson states, "Interlingual translation or translation proper" is "an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language...[that] substitutes messages in one language not for separate code-units but for entire messages in some other language....Thus translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes" (146). Later, during the Renaissance period the main purpose of translation was not only to translate the content but also a transmission of linguistic and cultural aspects to the other. Since the literary and artistic works of each language and culture found a way of expression in other languages through translation, it led to the literary enrichment of the different languages of Europe. During the colonial period Indian drama mainly consisted of translations of Shakespeare and Kalidasa which were then translated by Indian dramatists into their own regional languages. Prominent writers like Mohan

Rakesh translated Kalidasa's *Abhijana Shakuntalam* and Hazari Prasad translated many plays of Rabindranath Tagore in the same manner so that they could be accessible to the society. During the post-independence period the scope of translation expanded by leaps and bounds and most playwrights started translating western drama in their regional languages, like Harivansh Rai Bachchan's *King Lear*, Rangeya Raghav's *Hamlet*. This led to mini implosions all over the country because of the newly developed theatrical interest in western drama. These translated dramas crossed the linguistic barriers and helped in the overall growth of this genre.

As the roots of drama lie in the ancient dramatic forms and theatre, there is a significant difference in the production of the plays which are translated and adapted for the contemporary society. This results in an adaptation where a historical-cultural representation of western drama is transformed according to the norms of the newer culture. This process was called *transculturation* or transcultural adaptation (*rupantar*). This involves a process wherein the body and the essence of drama are retained yet the representation is altered to suit the cultural needs of society. Frank Kermode explains that translations "become transitions from a past to a present system of beliefs, language, generic expectations," and renovations become "very specific attempts to establish the relevance of a document which has had a good chance of losing it" (117-118). Shakespeare was one of the first western playwrights whose plays underwent a widespread transculturation in India. Some of the other playwrights also to have this influence were Brecht, Ibsen and Shaw whose works generated multiple indigenous versions in Hindi, India's main trans-regional language. Some of the productions in India which can best embody the example of theatrical interculturism include *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (with Ebrahim Alkazi and Vijay Mehta, 1972 and 1974), *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Othello* (with Ebrahim Alkazi, 1983), and Richard Schechner's *Mother Courage* (1981). During the post-independence period, the primary focus of

transculturation in Indian theatre was not the written text but its enactment. Although this lead to sustaining of many theatre groups like 'Bohurupee' in Kolkata or 'Theatre Unit' in Mumbai but it resulted in the scarcity of original Indian plays.

The term *Intertextuality* was first introduced by Julia Kristeva in the 1960s to describe the relationship between texts. This form influences the postmodern drama to a creative combination of cultural and textual codes without aligning with any one tradition. Intertextualitydenotes the practice of drawing upon concepts, ideas, ideologies from other texts that are merged in the new text. Aparna Dharwadker states, "A third variety of intertextuality in Indian theatre involves the reconfiguration of preexisting, usually self-sufficient prose narratives – short stories, novels, or folk tales – as drama" (363). According to Dharwadker, the pre-colonial word 'traditional influence' was postcolonially called intertextuality. In intertextual works, a textual reference within a text reflects the text used as a reference. In the field of drama, intertextuality is reflected through two major forms: one where the printed original text is adapted for the enactment on stage and secondly the 'theatre of stories' which retains the original words from the texts and is re-enacted with minimal theatrical interventions. Although this was followed for many years by Indian authors like Premchand, Rabindranath Tagore under the banner of National School of Drama, some other authors discredited it as anti-theatrical and second rate authorship. The postulated reason for the influence of western cultural and artistic modes was the colonial rule of the British over India almost over two hundred years. Harish Trivedi quotes what Homi Bhabha states, "The postcolonialism that has come to pass certainly has no simple norms, nor can the inter-text be called a simple text." Intertextuality thus is a complex phenomenon as Bhabha continues: "In an intermeshing of the two major 'post' discourses of our times, the ever deferred semantic and semiotic contingencies of the postmodern have infected the urgent oppositional political impulse that initially underlay the postcolonial, to form a condition of hybrid identity ideally suited to the 'translational transnational'"

(Trivedi 130). Intertextuality summarizes the idea when the dramatists borrow from other texts so as to represent their own socio-politico-cultural values. Another significant development in drama that marks transculturism and intertextuality is the introduction of the 'Dialectical Theatre' of Bertolt Brecht, near the end of his career in Germany. This dramatic writing and theatrical representation introduced the alienating effect and the concepts of *Gestus* or gesture and *die Fabel* (analysis of the plot of the play).

Farrah Fatima in her article states, "Theatre is a relationship, which neither establishes a union, nor creates a communion, but ritualizes the reciprocal strangeness and the laceration of the social body hidden beneath the uniform skin of dead myth and values" (153). Thus in the field of post-independence theatre, ancient-modern, Indian-western, dramatic-narrative works not only exist but also co-relate with and influence each other. The shift from the earlier era of 'influence' to the post-colonial (intertextuality) not only represents the intermingling of different cultures but also helps to redefine their identities of the writers and their work.

Karnad is an innovative and multifaceted writer who imbibes several personalities in one. Moreover, like his contemporary playwrights Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sircar and Mahesh Dattani, he has given a new direction to Indian English drama. But unlike his contemporaries, he adapts mythical and historical material with a view of giving it a psychological interpretation. He takes up religious and legendary tales from his own culture and unfolds them in the light of modern perceptions and thought. Girish Karnad's plays offer an opportunity to examine the characteristics of the new kind of modern plays produced during that era. He created a hybrid theatre that reflected the complex subjectivities of Modernism with different dramaturgical structures and acting styles. Karnad's *Yayati, Tughlaq* and *Hayavadana* are examples of 'folk forms' and myth creatively reproduced in an urban setting. Siyuan Liu states, "In *Hayavadana*, Karnad employs a linear narrative

structure, the proscenium stage, the fourth wall and human characters, strategically placing them in a play with a structure of concentric circles, several non-human characters, an acting style that occasionally breaks the fourth wall" (208). He represents the contemporary life with all its conflicts, vain hopes, absurdity and dilemma. In his search for a new form of drama, Karnad was inspired by prominent playwrights like Brecht, Ibsen, Shakespeare, Sartre and Camus. In Karnad's work there is a reflection of the fusion of Indian classical and the western or the modern traditions.

In *Hayavadana*, by weaving structures, aesthetics, and techniques of western theatre and traditional Indian theatre, specifically *Yakshagana* plays, Karnad created a play that is both western and Indian. He combines two genres that have never before been put together. His spectators experience a new, third genre and also see the original two in a new way. He has contextualized it in such a way that it allows the spectators to reconsider their theatrical expectations, social customs and cultural assumptions.

One of the artistic and philosophical manifestations of Modernism was the Expressionist movement that swept the world in the early twentieth century. **Expressionism** began in Germany before World War I and was a movement in art, especially painting, that began as a revolt against Realism, Naturalism and Impressionism of the nineteenth century. The philosopher Douglas Kellner states, "Expressionism arose in a period in which analyses of the alienation, reification, and dehumanization of the individual, and the fragmentation of the human personality, had become widespread." Emphasising the sense of individual experience and quest, Kellner states that the "expressionist rebellions contained impulses toward the fulfilment and spiritual realization of the individual combined with revolts against repressive socio-cultural conditions" (13).

Expressionists are concerned with the emotions and thoughts of individuals and deal with the hidden desires and impulses of the human mind. The term first applied to painting, was coined by the French painter Julien-Auguste Hervé in 1901 and was then soon applied to other art forms like poetry, music, architecture and fiction. Expressionist drama is an assorted mix of reality and super-reality and was more usefully applied to the different elements of drama. It was both subjective and arbitrary.

Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* appears to be based on the principles of the modernist movement of Expressionism but with a difference. His plays are a fusion of myth and folk tales with expressionist techniques. The methods and techniques he employs, originate from expressionism in a distinctive manner. The main characters in his play suffer from dislocation of their personalities or 'selves' as well as alienation of their 'souls.'

Girish Karnad uses these modern techniques of expressionism, and Brechtian techniques such as the alienation effect and 'epic theatre', deconstructionism, among others, in his plays. He is a modern dramatist and his plays display the assorted picture of all these techniques along with the use of mythic Indian folktales that not only lend uniqueness to his plays but also make his plays exciting and interesting to read. Karnad takes up the issues of the confused state of a modern man in the plays by blending mythical with realist techniques. These techniques help in exhibiting the unhappy dislocated 'self' and the alienated 'soul' as the disintegration of the human personality in the modernistic society.

In his play *Hayavadana* (1975), Karnad has used these techniques to intensify the anarchic state of the modern individuals in quest of the unreachable. This satirizes the individuals' yearning for a perfect life full of pleasures and happiness. The major characters of the play are Devadutta, Kapila, Padmini, Hayavadana and Bhagavata (the narrator). According to Shamenaz Bano,

"*Hayavadana* proves that modern Indian drama is attached with the traditions of the country....But it is also a story about Indian culture and people who belong to this culture. So, *Hayavadana* is a mythological triangular love-story based on the search of identity" (43). In the opening scene, Bhagvata addresses Lord Ganesha as 'O single-tusked destroyer of incompleteness' that signifies that the deity is himself imperfect while the devotees beg him for the gift of a perfect and successful life. This not only sketches out the thematic implications of the play but also conveys the characteristic feature of expressionist theatre. Hayavadana, the character, also represents the identity crisis that is experienced by people torn between the conflicting desires and demands of this modern age. He tries to adjust with the ongoing internal conflicts to resolve his problematic condition. Hayavadana wants to be a complete horse or a complete man rather than having components of both. He puts up a veil wherever he goes to hide his dislocated personality and his feeling of self-alienation. He neither wholly belonged to the animal world nor to the human world, thus could not involve himself fully in the human society.

Focusing on the characteristics and techniques of expressionist play, J.L. Styan states, "*characters* were stereotypes and caricatures rather than individual personalities, and represented social groups rather than particular people. In their impersonality, they could appear grotesque and unreal, and the mask was reintroduced to the stage as a 'primary symbol' of the theatre: It is unchangeable, inescapable'" (5). Karnad's *Hayavadana* presents the absurd and impersonated forms of individuals who are caught in dilemma of their identities and faltering human relationships. J.L. Styan states for expressionist drama, "*The plot and structure* of the play tended to be disjointed and broken into episodes, incidents and tableaux, each making a point of its own. Instead of the dramatic conflict of the well-made play, the emphasis was on a sequence of dramatic statements made by the dreamer, usually the author himself" (4). Expressionistic techniques are also employed by Karnad in certain scenes where dolls are endowed with speaking skills.

Doll I and II are seen to be engaged in a ceaseless talk with each other, reviewing the transformations happening in the lives of Devadutta and Padmini as also the inner workings of Padmini's mind.

In the early 1920s, a literary and artistic movement gathered pace in Paris which focused on doing away with the traditions of society that curtailed the freedom of individual thinking and thus promoted the concept of free thinking. This movement was called **Surrealism**. The essence of this movement was liberation and exploration – liberation from the rules of society which inhibit thinking, and exploration of the unknown with one's imagination and dreams. Surrealism was inspired by Sigmund Freud and his theory dealing with the concept of the conscious and the subconscious mind. In drama it explores dreams and imagination and challenges the logics of realism and representation. The dramatists were trying to explore the hidden, unconscious dreams and imagination that could give them an insight into the human mind and its different realms. André Breton, who wrote the first *Manifesto of Surrealism* in 1924, wrote "a 'revolution of the self' – an attempt to touch the very *core* of one's self, in its purest form, unaffected by the external world and its influences."

Surrealism became popular in all fields of life, be it literature, poetry, art, photography, cinema, philosophy or politics. Some of the famous promoters of Surrealism are Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard, Robert Desnos, Benjamin Péret, Antonin Artaud and René Crevel as writes; Salvador Dalí, Rene Magritte, Joan Miró, Yves Tanguy and André Masson as artistes; Luis Buñuel as filmmaker and Man Ray as photographer.

Karnad's *Nāga-Mandala* is a classical example of Surrealism wherein the main actors are in a state of hypothetical imagination but are still anchored in the basic tradition of Indian theatre. The play focuses on the changes occurring in Indian society and characteristic behaviours of the people. Aparna Dharwadker specifies,

"Karnad's *Nāga-Mandala* incorporates two separate Kannada folktales but does not follow any particular form; instead, it gives inanimate objects (such as flames in village lamps) human representation, includes dance and music, and makes extensive use of mime to dispel the illusion of realist action" (*Theatres of Independence* 314).

Like all the playwrights of his generation, Karnad's work too reveals the tension that exists between the traditional and the modern theatre. He, however, used this to his advantage to develop his own style of social realism which took inspiration from traditional Indian folklore and combined it with the innovations of European playwrights. He was thus able to convey through his plays the concerns of today's men and women in his own idiosyncratic manner.

In *Nāga-Mandala*, based on a folktale told by A.K. Ramanujan, Karnad uses conventional and subversive modes to depict surrealism in the play. In this play he uses the ancient myth of 'Naga', found in Brahman, Buddhist and Islamic literatures and blends it with the modern times. This not only emphasizes the influence of the myth and folklore of yesteryears on contemporary thought, but also explores the concept of surrealism through its imaginative depictions. According to B.V. Karanth, "*Nāga-Mandala*, a play with a cobra is based on the ancient folklore and fertility myth to grant it a mystically romantic colour" (Pandey 54).

The play opens up in a surrealistic setting where the audience is transported into an imaginary world that defies the conventions of logic. The audience is made to believe and join the world of fantasy. The fictional playwright who is introduced in the first scene of the play is shown to be suspended between life and death. He has been cursed for making his audience fall asleep while watching his plays. He promises the audience: "I swear by this absent God, if I survive this night I shall have nothing more to do with themes, plots and stories. I abjure all story-telling, all play-acting" (*Nāga-Mandala* 2). The play focuses on the psychological

transformation of the protagonist Rani from innocence to experience and ignorance to knowledge. This play shows the stark realities of the inner life of men and women.

The Story begins with the introduction of the newly wedded couple Rani and Appanna. Rani is young and is left neglected, deserted, humiliated and lonely by her husband Appanna that causes her immense suffering, whereas her husband is involved in an extramarital affair with a concubine. Rani dreams of an eagle and asks: '"where are you taking me'? And the eagle answers: 'Beyond the seven seas and seven isles.... your parents wait for you'. So Rani says: 'Do they? Then please, please take me to them – immediately. Here I come.' So the Eagle carries her clear across the seven seas" (*Collected Plays I*: 254).

Surrealism is an artistic perspective that bridges together reality and imagination. The purpose of this was to overcome the contradictions of the conscious and the unconscious mind by creating unreal stories full of juxtapositions. Appanna displays power instead of love and treats Rani as a disposable object. Once Rani sees a golden stag in a dream who says: "I am not a stag, he explains, I am a prince" (*Collected Plays I*: 255). Rani is disappointed as she wakes up and realizes that the prince was in her dreams and was not real. She wanted him as her secret lover but it was only a fantasy.

Surrealism uses images and metaphors that compel the audience to think deeper about the subconscious state of characters. It creates dream-like stories that often defy logic. Kurudavva who is like Rani's mother in-law extends her help by providing Rani a concoction with pseudo-magical powers as she is concerned for Rani's married life. Rani pours that magic potion on the ant-hill in which lives a king Cobra (Naga). Magic and Naga are psychic phenomenon, in fact, an externalization of Rani's inner urges whose fulfilment she seeks. She sees a husband figure in the lover Naga who resembles her husband and visits her secretly at night.

Naga approaches her tenderly; he comes and sits very close to her. When she tries to move away, he suddenly grabs her and tells her: "Don't be afraid. Put your head against my shoulder.... (*she has fallen asleep against his chest. He slowly unties her hair...smells* it)" (270). The first time love-making is mesmerizing for Rani, and her experience is projected through Naga and Rani joining the dancing flames. The flames invite them to dance and it is narrated: "*Come let us dance through the weaver-bird's nest and light the hanging lamps of glow-worms through the caverns in the ant-hill and set the diamond in the cobra's crown ablaze*" (*Collected Plays I*: 274).

Rani enjoys her lover's company so much that she wants the night to last forever, seeking fulfilment to the brim. Her impatience and desire for Naga is portrayed through the innovative use of lighting. The darkened stage is illuminated by the lamps that Rani lights in her house. The arrival of Naga is indicated through the imagery of the fragrance that accompanies the Naga as he moves. Rani states: "There it is...The smell of the blossoming night queen! How it fills the house before he comes! How it welcomes him! God, how it takes me, sets each fibre in me on fire!" (*Collected Plays I*: 281). Karnad attempts to stretch the boundaries of the mind of the reader and makes them move beyond the realms of logic and rationality. He tries to break free from the traditional constraints in an extreme yet positive way.

Symbolism is a figure of speech that is used when an author wants to create a certain mood or emotion in a work of literature. It is the use of an object, person, situation or word to represent something else, like an idea, in literature. Symbolism adds depth to a literary work. The audience is made to reflect deeply on what they see or what they hear. Many themes and ideas are profoundly affected when presented indirectly through symbols. It helps the audience to relate the defining characteristics of the object being portrayed to an abstract idea. Symbolism has played an important role in drama and has enriched literary works by enabling the

writer to bring in complex idea together. It sometimes provides symbolic meaning and sometimes self-evident literal meanings.

Karnad's play *Tughlaq* utilizes different suggestive and concrete images that make the play more appealing. Some of the classical examples are: Tughlaq's insomnia reflecting the intense turmoil in his mind, his walking in the moonlight signifying his madness. Tughlaq wants his kingdom to spread all over the world and so compares himself to a tree which wants to spread its branches all over. But he also knows in his mind that unless the subjects who are the very foundation of his empire understand his ideals, he cannot fulfil his dreams and build his kingdom into an ideal one, just like a tree is made strongest by its roots. He wants to reach the highest of places and have his name and kingdom spread all over the world. Tughlaq desires to cover the whole earth with greenery or prosperity. He considers himself to be a secular leader and wants to unite the boundaries of all states by his rule. Tughlaq's dreams and aspirations are thus presented through apt symbols in the play.

While conversing with a young Sentry, Sultan states: "I was twenty-one when I came to Daulatabad first, and built this fort. I supervised the placing of every brick in it and I said to myself, one day I shall build my own history like this, brick by brick" (*Tughlaq* 53). The fort built by Tughlaq is symbolic of his building his dreams. Symbolism is evident in Tughlaq's words when he describes the appearance of a half-built gate trying to contain the sky within its cleft. When Sultan tells, "One night I was standing on the ramparts of the old fort here. There was a torch near me flapping its wild wings and scattering golden feathers on everything in sight. There was a half-built gate nearby trying to contain the sky within its cleft. Suddenly something happened – as though someone had cast a spell. The torch, the gate, the fort and the sky – all melted and merged and flowed in my blood-stream with the darkness of the night" (*Tughlaq* 53). This reflects the protagonist's aspirations that

never reach its glory and shatter down. The half-burnt torch signifies his hopes that get extinguished half-way. The rose garden envisages his garden of ideals which has dried up towards the end just like his ambitions that never reached the final destination.

During the conversation in Scene Eight between the old guard and the young guard discussing the fort, the young sentry asks, "And isn't that long white thing the road from Daulatabad to Delhi?...They say it's the widest road in the world. But it looks no bigger than a thin snake from here" on this the old guard replies: "And five years ago that snake bit a whole city to death" (*Tughlaq* 51). The route from Delhi to Daulatabad is compared to a snake which represents an image of poison and death. The kingdom is described by Tughlaq as "a honeycomb of diseases." It is the store-house of maladies and desperately requires the help of a physician. The step-mother aptly refers to the country as "a kitchen of death" as deaths have become a routine event and are treated as any other domestic affair. In such a state of affairs, Tughlaq compares himself to a pig rolling in gory mud. The fort is also said to have a route coiled like a python inside it. Those who enter the maze of this fort can never find their way back.

Prayer has another symbolical significance in the play. The Muslim chieftain, along with Sheikh Shams-ud-din, conspires to kill the Sultan at the time of prayers. The plan is exposed by Ratansingh to Sultan and Shihab-ud-din is cunningly killed by Sultan. The assassination during prayers is reminiscent of Sultan's conspiracy to kill his father and brother at the prayer hour. U.R. Ananthamurthy mentions in the Introduction to *Tughlaq,* "The use of prayer for murder is reminiscent of what Tughlaq himself did to kill his father. That prayer, which is most dear to Tughlaq, is vitiated by him as well as enemies, is symbolic of the fact that his life is corrupted at its very source" (ix).

The play *Tughlaq* is a remarkable example of Symbolism as it not only has many vistas that are symbolic but the play itself is symbolic. Although it was written sixteen years after independence, the condition of the country was still in a state of turmoil and was no better than the initial days of independence. Thus, *Tughlaq* becomes symbolic of the dreams of Nehru wherein the politicians take most advantages of the government's policies. The aims of a better world are never reached and India like many other third-world countries is stuck in a limbo of development yet never fully developed.

Symbolism began with the underlying thought that to represent one's full human experience like dreams, fantasy and vision, it is more essential to have imaginative techniques rather than scientific methods. The symbolist writers attempted to express the inexpressible with the help of symbolic gestures and metaphoric imagery. In Karnad's *Hayavadana,* Padmini seemed to be a perfect character considering her beautiful appearance, but in fact, her imperfectness lies in her indecisiveness. The two-headed bird engraved at the door of her house is symbolic of her dual personality.

Girish Karnad has given the Indian theatre the richness that can be equated only with his talents as a playwright, actor and director. He has represented India abroad like an envoy of art and culture. In all his plays although he moves away from tradition but has borrowed various techniques and story-lines from myth, folktales and history. His uniqueness lies in the revival of symbolic and ritualistic aspects of drama like dressing, singing, dancing, chanting of hymns in yagna etc. Moutushi Chakravartee states, "Karnad once explained to me in an interview that since he felt incapable of inventing stories, he drew his plots from history, folklore, myths and legends. Indeed, all his plays derive from pre-existing material, yet, like Shakespeare, he transforms the raw material into a unique drama of human emotions and feelings" (183).

By modern drama, one usually means the period between the mid-nineteenth century and World War II. Writers and artists started to depict real life environment and dramatic plots in the mid-nineteenth century. However, this did not mean that writers and creative artists broke off from the past or from their cultural roots. As Jung points out, "The 'unhistorical-ness' of myths finds affinity with the mind of a man which is also 'unhistorical' as far as his racial memory is concerned...this 'unhistorical-ness' does not mean rootless-ness. Nor do myths become irrelevant to contemporary sensibilities" (229). It is difficult to say if Karnad is committed to any one particular philosophy. Though expressions of Existentialism, Surrealism and Symbolism are discernible in his plays yet he is not seen to be adhering to any fixed pattern but using modernistic techniques to express his understanding of life and its varied aspects. He examines history, myths and folktales and finds contemporary values in their context. Each play of Karnad is enriched by his innovative dramatic devices and is a good theatre piece, suitable for many dramatic interpretations on the stage.

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Chapter Six

Conclusion

During the post-independence era, many dramatists, writing in Hindi, English, and in regional languages, shaped a new beginning of Indian drama. Some of the leading playwrights of that period included Badal Sircar, Mahesh Dattani, Vijay Tendulkar, Mohan Rakesh, Girish Karnad, along with others. In the mid-twentieth century, writers felt the need to resolve the conflict between the contradictory impulses faced by Indians in the newly independent country. It was a phase when playwrights felt unsure about their allegiance to the native culture since the two hundred years of British rule had left an indelible impression on the Indian psyche and modes of expression. Many modern dramatists like Girish Karnad at that time felt the impulse of decolonizing the Indian theatre and retracing it back to its roots of classical and folk theatre. This led to a search for new dramatic devices and new modes of expression that could capture the sense of dilemma experienced by the playwrights as they tried to break free of the influence of western and European cultural and literary traditions.

Girish Karnad is one of the most versatile playwrights of the modern era due to his multifaceted achievements. His generation of playwrights was part of a political and literary era which was engaged in the search for its ties with Indian history and culture that had been weakened due to a long period of colonial rule by the British. This gave rise to the historical contexts of Karnad's plays like *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* and *Tughlaq*. Even his first play *Yayati* was influenced by C. Rajagopalachari's version of the *Mahabharata*. Six out of nine plays of Karnad are based on myths and legends presented in the contemporary perspective to portray man's struggle to attain perfection. Karnad was greatly influenced by the *Natak* Companies that visited his native village Sirsi, and the *Yakshagana* folk plays of Karnataka which he saw during his childhood, while the plays and stage productions of the plays of Shakespeare, Bertolt Brecht and Henrik Ibsen also inspired him greatly. Along with the profound influence of folk and Kannada theatre, Karnad also acquired and employed the technique of alienation from Brecht; symbols and myths

from Ibsen, and an overall engagement of the elements of drama as propounded and theorised by western playwrights.

Critics and researchers have examined various ideas and aspects of Karnad's plays like the thematic strands, characterisation, structure, use of myths, history, religious and political issues etc. However, the dramatic technique in his plays was a relatively unexplored component that had not been analysed comprehensively. A detailed study of the major plays of Karnad reveals the effective and insightful use of different dramatic techniques that enhance the performative element, character development and the storytelling aspect of the plays.

The ancient text titled *The Nātyaśāstra* written sometime during the era of Plato and Aristotle to the seventh century CE is one of the first documented records of Indian dramaturgy. *The Nātyaśāstra* in Sanskrit by Bharata *Muni* (sage) is a complete treatise on dance, music, drama and is also described in the Vedas which was later translated into English by Adya Rangacharya. *The Nātyaśāstra* is a considered as an encyclopaedia on dramaturgy as it includes stage craft, construction of theatre and all possible actions which may form the basis of drama. Some of the other aspects included in this are the dance forms, illumination of stage, physical gesture, costumes, movement of limbs and expression of emotions. *Nātyaśāstra* also defines the type of plays and various aspects related to production of plays. A study of the quintessential elements of *The Nātyaśāstra* reveals its basic engagement with aesthetics and its emphasis on the aesthetic dimension of all art forms including drama, music and performance.

Chapter Two 'Vivifying History, Myth and Folklore' explores the techniques – dramatic irony, speech devices, symbolism and masks in Karnad's *Tughlaq*, *Hayavadana* and *Nāga-Mandala*. Drama owes its inception to the Greeks who not only initiated it but also established the rules for its stage depiction. Over a period of time new cultures and new conventions have redefined drama and its forms but

dramatic technique has evolved significantly for a finer and more sophisticated portrayal of dramatic situations on the stage. The selection and application of appropriate dramatic techniques reveals the playwright's world-view and his/her perceptions about the theme being explored.

Manfred Pfister analyses in his *The Theory and Analysis of Drama* (1991) the structure of plays in theatrical and dramatic contexts. His communicative theory distinguishes the dramatic texts from the narrative texts. He discusses the role of the author and the role of the fictional character, created by him, that speaks in the play. His model classifies various semiotic levels of the dialogue between the sender and the receiver that vary from characters within the play, to the fictional narrator who might figure as one of the characters, or also serve as a spokesperson of the playwright to convey information to the audience directly. The various levels of narrations in drama represent the different ontological planes being depicted in the world of the play.

Dramatic Irony, a technique originally popularised by Shakespeare, created a suspenseful expectation where the audience or the readers shared the knowledge about the consequence of an action or a decision which was not known to the characters themselves. Dramatic irony enhances the dramatic pleasure of the audience by placing them at a privileged position. In Karnad's *Nāga-Mandala*, Rani the protagonist, talks to the cobra (Naga) thinking of him as her husband, who has actually assumed the shape of a human. This fact is known to the audience but Rani is oblivious of the reality. Similarly, in *Hayavadana*, Kapila is charmed by the beauty of his friend Devadatta's wife Padmini, a fact that is revealed to the audience but not to her husband Devadatta. In Karnad's *Tughlaq*, the role of the step-mother in killing Najib and Sultan getting Sheikh-imam-ud-din killed is evident to the reader but not to the characters of the play. All these examples of Dramatic Irony are used to heighten the suspense and enhance the audience's interest.

Different speech devices like monologues and soliloquies have been used by Karnad as a means of character revelation to express his/her innermost thoughts. These enable the audience to understand the character's inner feelings or motives for action without acknowledging the presence of another character. Monologues are dialogues narrated by a single person speaking out his/her thoughts either to himself or to the audience. This can occur at any time in a play be it a prologue or an epilogue or the scenes of an act. For instance, in *Hāyavadana*, the speeches of Bhagavata as the *sutradhar* (narrator) and in *Nāga-Mandala* various levels of narration by the author – as the fictional playwright, the flames as narrators and another flame introducing the story to the audience are perfect examples of monologues.

The speech device Soliloquy is another type of dramatic convention in which the character speaks aloud his feelings unaware of another characters on the stage and the audience. In *Hayavadana*, Padmini's fantasies about the physique of Kapila, in *Nāga-Mandala,* Rani dreaming of flying with an eagle to her parent's house and in *Tughlaq*, the Sultan discussing his political strategies with himself, are examples of soliloquies that expose feelings or intentions of the characters. These speech devices are some of the essential techniques used in the plays to provide an insight into the character.

Symbolism involves the use of various symbols that convey a different but a deeper and a more significant idea than their literal meaning. The meaning of symbolic figures shifts with the context and depends on how or when they are used. In *Hayavadana,* the head of a horse and an elephant on a human body respectively are symbolic of the alienation within oneself. The image of a two-headed bird in Padmini's house is symbolic of her confused state of mind and her inability to decide and choose between two possibilities. The portrayal of flame narrators as females in *Nāga-Mandala* symbolises the gossiping nature of women. Sultan's

playing of chess in *Tughlaq* symbolises his manipulative ways where he wants to eliminate his enemies tactfully. Another description of a hidden passage in the king's fort is compared to a python symbolizes greed and his devouring nature. This technique provides deeper meaning to what is actually mentioned in the play.

The use of the mask as a dramatic technique not only provides the audience with aesthetic and intellectual pleasure but is a pointer to another level of reality that is hidden behind the mask. The play *Hayavadana*, establishes many roles that a mask can play. The use of a horse's mask on human body depicts the character Hayavadana's search for wholeness to be a complete being. In another act, the exchange of heads is actually the exchange of masks, between the two male protagonists – Kapila and Devadatta thereby changing their identities. The colour of masks also exemplify the characteristics of the various characters in the play, like a pale mask for Devadatta, a dark-coloured mask for Kapila and a feminine face as a mask with a red tongue for goddess Kali. In *Nāga-Mandala* the use of the mask of a cobra is a very important device around which the whole story revolves. It is used as a link between an old folk tale of the Naga-cult prevalent in ancient times with the postcolonial patriarchal issues. In *Tughlaq*, the use of the mask is shown highlight the resemblance of Sheikh Imam-ud-din with the Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. This helps the Sultan to successfully complete his mission of getting the Sheikh treacherously killed. Masks are used creatively by Karnad to enhance the imagination of audience and to express the behaviour of the characters in a role-play.

Chapter Three titled 'Dramatizing Spectacle and Action' provides a detailed account of use of dramatic techniques – Plot-subplot, Costumes, Stage Combat and Lighting in Karnad's *Yayati, Talé-Daṇḍa* and *The Fire and the Rain*. The use of these techniques enhances the theme and at the same time highlights the performance and the most desired components of the play. Richard Schechner draws

attention to the performative nature of society, where everyday events and gestures are conducted under a code of performance and every individual performs in some way or another. The focus of the initial playwrights was drama based on the script; however, with new developments the focus of the dramatists shifted further to 'script' and 'performance.' This has been explained by Schechner through his diagram of four overlapping concentric discs from the innermost well-defined ring of drama to the largest and loosely defined circle of performance.

Plot is a sequence of events which represents the main action of drama. It connects all the three parts of drama – the beginning, middle and end. This chapter explains the concept of plot based on Gustav Freytag's pyramid depicting the action in a drama and comprising of five essential elements namely exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and denouement. Freytag's pyramid figuratively portrays the systematic building up of events of the story. A subplot is usually a secondary story connecting the main plot and involving supporting characters. Although the subplot has a limited impact on the main plot yet it propels the action further and is a necessary dramatic element to connect the events and characters. In *Yayati* the main plot focuses on prince Pooru, King Yayati and his queen Devayani and the maid Sharmishtha. The subplot relates to the strong bonding of love between Devayani and Sharmishtha since childhood and their subsequent animosity. The plot of *The Fire and the Rain* moves around a seven-year-long Yajna (fire sacrifice) being performed by the head priest Paravasu and the extra-marital relationship of his wife Vishakha with his cousin Yavakri. This illicit relationship that is unacceptable to Paravasu's father-in-law Raibhya leads to a sequence of revenge killings. The subplot features the caste system and the love affair of the Brahmin boy Aravasu with the tribal girl Nittilai, which is again against the laws of society. The plot of *Talé-Daṇḍa* is based on the historical Bhakti movement that draws a parallel between the Mandir-Mandal conflict of the 1980's. The plot highlights the *sharana* movement started by Basavanna, the social reformer and the poet, who wanted to

eradicate the system of untouchability, casteism and opposed temple worship. The events take a violent turn and the movement ends up in bloodshed involving other major characters of the play. The subplot of the play is based on the evil designs of the other three characters of the play – Sovideva, Damodar and Manchanna, when they hatch a plot to kill the King.

Costumes as a dramatic device signify the class and caste, the financial and the social status of the characters. They reveal the time, season, culture and traditions related to the theme of the play. In *Yayati*, the use of different types of costumes for the Queen and the Maid denote the hierarchy prevalent in the society. In *Talé-Daṇḍa* the use of saffron-coloured clothing by the saints and the *sharanas* and the depiction of tonsured heads of the widows reflect the rituals and traditions of India. In *The Fire and the Rain*, the priests in their free flowing robes and sacred threads and the king's head covered with the crown are powerful signifiers of their status and authority.

Stage combat is a specialised technique where the illusion of a physical combat is created without actually harming the performers. In *Yayati*, the fight between Sharmishtha and Devayani, and Sharmishtha dragging the latter to the well is effectively portrayed with this technique. In *Talé-Daṇḍa* the killing of King Bijjala by Jagadeva is deftly conveyed through stage combat. The battle between Brahma Rakshasa and Yavakri in *The Fire and the Rain* is a classic example of a stage combat where the audience can see the fight happening with arms like spears and tridents, yet the characters are only play-acting and not harming each other.

Stage Lighting or the craft of lighting the stage is another potent dramatic technique that engages the audience. Lighting can alter the mood, enhance the theme or highlight any particular area or character which the dramatists want to project. These can also be used to project the time of day as it is done in *Yayati* by Swaranlata who lights the oil lamps at night. The transition between various scenes

in the play *Yayati* is also done by darkening the stage. In *Talé-Daṇḍa*, the arrival of a huge group of *sharanas* approaching the palace at the time of sunset is depicted by a decreasing intensity of lights. Highlighting one area on stage while darkening another helps the audience to focus on the shown plot. This example is followed in *The Fire and the Rain* where the different areas are highlighted in different acts with the help of lighting, like the hermitage of Raibhya, and Paravasu entering his house in the dark with a covered face so that nobody is able to recognize him.

Chapter Four 'Enhancing the Visual and Aural Elements,', covers Karnad's plays: *Bali: The Sacrifice, The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* and his monologues *Flowers* and *Broken Images* with references to the techniques – Imagery, Props, Music and Sounds.

Bharata Muni's *Nātyaśāstra* and Aristotle's *Poetics* are considered as treatises in Indian and Western dramaturgy and both have theorised about the theatrical elements of drama. Aristotle's *Poetics* written in 335 B.C. which is the bench mark in the history of literature is considered the most comprehensive theoretical study of drama. *Nātyaśāstra* is associated more with the sentiments and emotions and elements of dance, music and performance. It has more of feminine allegiance whereas the principles enunciated in the *Poetics* are more action-oriented and oriented towards masculinity. The folk, mythical and religious elements in Karnad's plays indicate a strong influence of the Indian dramatic tradition that has emerged over the centuries.

Imagery is a writing technique that paints a virtual picture in the minds of the audience with the help of devices like metaphors, similes, personification and hyperbole. A Metaphor is a comparison of two unlike things, as comparing a known concept to the unknown. In *Bali: The Sacrifice*, the Queen's attraction towards the Mahout's melodious voice is an example of the metaphor where the audience knows that Mahout's heavenly voice is the reason behind Rani's attraction but they know

that the Mahout as an ugly low-caste elephant keeper. Another example of metaphor occurs when the protagonist is forced to look within herself, instead of looking at others in the play *Broken Images* after the truth about her plagiarism is known to the world. Simile, another dramatic device compares two different things and draws a similarity between them. In *Bali: The Sacrifice,* this is evident when the Mahout compares himself to an ugly bandicoot and hides his identity in the dark from the Queen. In *Flowers,* the priest uses this device to compliment the beauty of the courtesan comparing her to beautiful objects like the flower. Personification is when ideas or inanimate things are referred to as human. In *Flowers,* the time of the priest's visit to Ranganayaki's house has been described as the tranquillity of the night, thus creating a suitable environment. Hyperbole is a speech pattern wherein a simple statement is exaggerated to create a greater impact. In the play *Broken Images,* the author presents the sounds as deafening so as to convey the meaning that all the voices are talking at the same time, and the protagonist is experiencing extreme mental and moral pressure.

Props are movable objects that are a part of the stage in a drama. These carry an additional message to the audience and enhance the realistic nature of the play. Different objects can be used as props to support and complement the theme and the idea. In *Bali: The Sacrifice,* props like lamps not only indicate the pre-modern time when there was no electricity, but also indicate the time of the night. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan,* Mackenzie's visit to the house of the famous historian and scholar Kirmani is presented on stage with lots of paper all around the house indicating his scholarly interests. In *Broken Images,* a studio setting is created by using props like a big TV, chairs, and microphones. In *Flowers,* the use of *Shiv linga* as a prop suggests that the priest is a worshipper of Lord Shiva. Another very important use of prop is assigning the identity of the character. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan,* the king can be identified with the help of his golden buckle and sword which highlight his royal status.

Music an intrinsic feature of drama since the days of *Nātyaśāstra* and is an audible and rhythmic way of expressing the emotions and thoughts of the character sometimes more effectively than dialogues. It enhances the experience of drama by altering the moods of observers, and can be either instrumental in the form of pure music or in the form of melody and songs. Karnad's *Bali*: *The Sacrifice* exemplifies most powerfully, the charisma of music wherein the Queen is attracted to the melodious voice of the Mahout, and develops an illicit relationship with him putting her life and that of the Mahout into danger. Music not only conveys happiness and elation but can also be used to express sadness and melancholy. In *Bali*: *The Sacrifice*, music invokes the happy relationship between the King and the Queen in the past, which has gradually turned sour. It enables the audience to experience the emotional turmoil of the protagonists. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*, music is used to depict scenes like arrival of the Sultan or his departure for battle. Hence the audience can anticipate through the music how the situation will take a turn. In *Flowers*, the sound of the temple bells and religious chants transports the audience to the setting of a temple. Visual imagery is governed and highlighted through theatrical music.

Sounds are used in conjunction with dialogues to establish the location or to support the situation being portrayed which can be on or offstage. The pitch, volume, quality and duration of sounds invoke various emotions and can alter the moods and the ambience during the drama. Artificial sounds like that of the breeze, wind, storm, smashing of woods, glass, and a speeding train are quite often used during the production of the plays to provide realistic effects. In *Bali: The Sacrifice*, the moaning of the Queen depicts the sensual relationship between the Mahout and the Queen which is done purposefully on the instructions of the Mahout so as to drive the soldiers away. In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* the salute of guns is used to convey the celebrations for the Sultan and the movement of soldiers is depicted by the sounds of footsteps. In *Flowers*, the arrival of the Chieftain in the

temple coincides with the sounds of the canon. In Karnad's *Broken Images*, when Manjula Nayak's truth is exposed, harsh deafening sounds portray the anger of protagonist.

The initial seeds of modern Indian theatre were sown during the pre-independence era when the themes, dramatic techniques, stage presentation of the plays carried a blend of eastern and western culture. Chapter five 'Towards a Modernist Poetics' discusses the modernist trend in Indian Writing in English, especially Indian drama, during the mid-twentieth century when writers moved away from the conventions of realist and naturalist writing and explored new devices and techniques to represent a more individualistic view of the world.

The post-independence phase constituted a major transformation in literature as writers drew from life and presented the social reality around them. Themes about the search for beauty in man and nature of the 1920s and 30s were supplanted by a preoccupation with themes like the meaning of life, cultural traditions, and the human values of freedom, idealism, and morality. Stories of God were replaced by a depiction of the challenges faced by a common man. Consequently, the literature of this period appealed not only to the higher classes but also to the masses due to its simplicity and directness. During the 1950s after independence, the horrors of partition disillusioned the people, and writers reacted against the political and social turbulence by focusing on the disintegration of society and the loss of India's cultural heritage. The entire genre of drama and fiction changed socio-culturally as the traditional, idealistic view of life was replaced by a concern with the socio-economic conditions of society.

Modern Indian drama was initiated by India People's Theatre Association (IPTA) and later got a stronghold in India with the establishment of Sangeet Natak Akademi. Modern Indian Theatre addressed various socio-political issues of people with the amalgamation of art, dance and music and fusing this with the folk forms.

Some well-known dramatists of this time are Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad, Mohan Rakesh and Badal Sircar who reinvestigated myth, history, legend, folk lore and religion in the context of the contemporary socio-political issues. Deviating from the western dramatic conventions, these playwrights were more experimental and innovative, and contributed to the growth of a new theatrical tradition in India. The literature of this period was a spontaneous expression of a state of mind and experience particular to these Indian writers themselves, and reflected the use of motifs from history, religious texts, myths, legends and contemporary politics.

Modernist Indian theatre broke new grounds and explored the new ideas and artistic practices brought into vogue by movements like Expressionism, Surrealism and Symbolism. Contemporary Indian theatre was epitomised by three main textual exchanges – translation, transculturation and intertextuality. Translation in simpler terms meant interpretation of literature in one's regional language which was possible due to the common origin of languages and their interrelated nature. Many Shakespearean plays were translated into regional languages like Harivansh Rai Bachchan's *King Lear*, Rangeya Raghav's *Hamlet*. However, the essence of the original work is not retained in such translations. This resulted in a hybrid form where the literary work was translated and adapted according to the culture where it was being staged. This process is called Transculturation or transcultural adaptation. Shakespeare, Brecht, Ibsen and Shaw were some of the playwrights whose work have been transculturally adapted across India as *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (with Ebrahim Alkazi and Vijay Mehta, 1972 and 1974), *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Othello* (with Ebrahim Alkazi, 1983). The third type of textual reform prevalent during this period was Intertextualityin which a textual reference within a text reflects the text used as a reference. In the field of drama, intertextuality is reflected through two major forms: one where the printed original text is adapted for the enactment on stage and secondly the 'theatre of stories' which

retains the original words from the texts and is re-enacted with minimal theatrical interventions.

Expressionism in theatre is concerned with the display of emotions and thoughts of individuals and their hidden desires. During this period, analyses of the estrangement and dehumanization of the individual, and the fragmentation of the human personality, had become a pervasive concern. Expressionist writing emphasised the sense of individual experience and quest, and contained impulses toward the fulfilment and spiritual realization of the individual along with a sense of rebellion against oppressive socio-cultural conditions. Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* uses characteristics and techniques associated with the expressionist writing, like the alienation effect, identity crisis and a search for completeness that is visible in some of the major characters of this play.

The term Surrealism indicates an attempt to reach beyond the limits and restrictions of the 'real'. Prevalent in Europe during the 1920s and 30s, Surrealism seeks to blend reality and imagination, and dissolve the boundaries between rationality and irrationality, exploring the energies of dreams, hallucinations and sexual desires. Surrealist drama and fiction uses metaphors that enable the audience to imagine the sub-conscious state of characters. Karnad's *Nāga-Mandala* provides a perfect example for this where the protagonist Rani is in a state of hypothetical imagination. She attempts to overcome the contradictions of the conscious and the unconscious mind by creating unreal stories full of juxtapositions. This play through its surrealistic setting transports the audience into the world of fantasy and folk lore. Symbolism involves the use of an object, person, situation or word in the original work, to represent something else, like an idea, in literature. It enables the author to knit complex idea through symbolic references and create new meanings. Symbolism is ingeniously used in Karnad's *Tughlaq* to bring in multiple meanings as well as to build in a complex richness of ideas pertaining to human desire, the

vicissitudes of life and the ramifications of human ambition. Karnad's *Hayavadana* also has made use of symbolic elements to underline the theme of the play through association or reference to other objects. Through these modernistic techniques Karnad creates multi-layered texts that raise complex issues and are open to manifold interpretations.

Dramatic technique includes the methods and devices that a playwright employs to achieve his/her desired ends. The technique of a play directs each of its significant components like character development, plot structure, setting and milieu, dialogues and performance. It is a tool that a playwright can use to enhance the meaning and the dramatic effect and heighten the element of conflict and tension. Drama is written to be performed rather than to be read. Hence the dramatist employs dramatic devices or techniques suitable for the stage while also using literary devices that are available for novelists.

Girish Karnad has successfully brought in many levels of meaning into his plays through the dramatic devices that he has adopted. This thesis has attempted to argue that the dramatic technique employed by Karnad has provided him tools to develop ideas, characters and plots, thus sharpening the focus and adding another dimension to his plays. The immense popularity of Karnad's plays is a pointer to his skill and perspicacity as an artist that has enabled him to create artistic works that have acquired global readership. Through an amalgamation of ancient Indian beliefs and contemporary issues, Karnad has brought to the surface the psychological conflicts as experienced by individuals, both modern and mythical, in challenging circumstances. Karnad captures modern anxieties and dilemmas by reworking ancient Indian tales in the form of plays. The varied dramatic devices that Karnad uses contribute to the artistic commingling of the Indian sensibility with the western dramatic tradition in his plays. A scrupulous study of Karnad's dramatic devices in

his major plays reveals the playwright's aesthetic sensibility and imaginative dexterity, and enables the reader to garner new meanings from the texts.

The objective of all research is to ask questions, probe and critique, and thus create new knowledge. A work of research does not so much offer answers and solutions — but sustains discussions. It leads scholars to further questions and dimensions of the creative work that can be analyzed at length by future researchers. Karnad's work is multifaceted and eloquent. It captures and subtly brings to life the multi-layered nature of reality. The dramatic effects in his plays are produced by an assemblage of many different elements and events that unite in the plays in a cumulative way. Karnad employs dramatic technique innovatively in such a manner that enhances and complements the themes that he is exploring. In fact, there are no strict demarcations separating his techniques from the themes that he explores – both reinforce each other in an intricate manner to create a dramatic impact. In many respects, his dramatic techniques mirror, as well as recreate, specific thematic strands. The process of reading and analyzing Karnad's plays brings in a new understanding of the art of playwriting and also leads to further questions dealing with the significance of the setting in Karnad's plays, both in terms of space and time, and how it structures emotion in the world of the play and evokes an emotional and an intellectual response from the readers and the audience. As a complex and expressive playwright, Girish Karnad's plays ensure that the journey of reading and researching his works is a satisfying and rewarding experience.

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PUBLICATIONS

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