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ROLE OF GODS AND GODDESSES IN GIRISH KARNAD'S *HAYAVADANA*

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ABSTRACT

Girish Karnad is the foremost play wright of the contemporary Indian stage. The present play *Hayavadana* by Girish Karnad is one of the famous Indian play. In this play gods and goddesses creates main role. The theme of the play is complex one. It begins with an invocation of lord of Ganesha, who is generally worshipped first among the gods. Karnad reveals the religious sentiments prevalent in our society, psychologically and culturally by showing the presence of goddess Kali. the Hindu rituals and superstitions are very well portrayed by showing people offering themselves to Kali. The goddess Kali is used as advice of existential element. She is terrible in appearance but is given all the characteristics of human being. Through the use of this device, Karnad shows that there are no readymade solutions for human problems.

Keywords: Lord Ganesha, Kali, *Hayavadana* , Karnad

Introduction:

Hayavadana is an enigmatic play. It was first presented in English by the Madras players in December 1972. the story of *Hayavadana* is taken from Katha saritsagara and thosma mann's version of it in the transposed heads. In this play Karnad deals with the problem of human identity and human relationship. The horse man's search completeness form the subplot of the play. *Hayavadana* , the play originally written in Kannada in 1970, the beginning of the play lord Ganesh is prayed considering him as the "Single tusked destroyer of incompleteness". How can a single tusked elephant-headed god be the destroyer of incompleteness is introduced int he opening scene.

An elephant head on human body, a broken tusk and a cracked belly. Whichever way be look at him he seems the embodiment of imperfection of incompleteness. How indeed can one fathom the mystery that this very vakrathunda Mahakaya, with his crooked face and distorted body.

The quixotic thing that crops up in the play is the efficacy of gods, goddesses and divine beings. Are they the real gods? Do they take active interest in human affairs or are they simply interested in being worshipped? Do they suffer from complexes like us human beings? Do they step into help or interfere only to complicate? Goddess Kali takes no need of Devadatta when he comes to hack his head off simply because he was lying. Kali's reaction to Padmini's query is that he had offered his head to Rudra and arms to her. "Head to him and arms to me!" Simply because you insisted on going there he came here and did this: says she. Kapila's hacking his head off is also not stopped because he too was lying but not so much thing is applied to Padmini because as per Kali's liking she spoke the truth. Her infidelity, her callousness for her husband does not find a

mention in Kali's statements. She appears in her divine form to the rescue of Padmini but is it a rescue? With one stroke Kali messes up the lives of there.

Kali of mount Chitrakoot who is described as mother of all nature appears to be indifferent to the welfare of human beings. She is more concerned to the reverence and the sacrifices done to her by them than looking after their good. She certainly nurses an ego and tells Padmini as a matter of fact that Devadatta was deceitful to her. Her grievance was that he had promised his head to Rudra and his arms to her. Think of it - head to him and arms to me! and to top it all he came and offered what he was supposed to give to Rudra because Padmini insisted on going to Rudra temple herself. She does not stop Devadatta and Kapila from cutting off their heads and offering them to her but when Padmini comes to put an end to herself she wakes up from her sleep and stops her. Had she not disallowed Padmini also then crisis would have been settled. Nobody would have been alive to undergo any trauma or pain or identity crisis. But she does not will it so. She grants a wish to Padmini but is quite indifferent to the logical fulfillment of it. Padmini transposes the heads and she being a goddess and a powerful one is aware of everything yet when Padmini places a sword on their necks. She grants the wish saying 'so be it'. Hence she is the one to create identity crisis for Padmini, Kapila and Devadatta. Padmini's cries to save her again fall on deaf ears. There seems to be some divine apathy towards human beings.

The second case under the study is of *Hayavadana* who goes to her temple as a last resort. The Bhagavatha spoke high of goddess Kali and described her as one who was always awake to the call of devotees. With great hope and aspiration, *Hayavadana* moves for the temple but comes back as disappointed and dejected being. He goes there in search for completeness. He has got a horse's head and wants to get rid of it for he neither belonged to human beings nor to the head of animals. In the temple of Kali even before he could complete his prayer goddess Kali grants it. Instead of becoming a complete human being he becomes a horse with human voice thus remains incomplete and disillusioned being. He is given the body in place of a human one. Still as if herself it not appeared that she leaves that human voice in him and he is left incomplete and his search for completeness continues.

Is it that goddess grants them a better option or better placement. In case of *Hayavadana*'s mother the celestial being has placed her in a better stead by converting her into a mare thus freeing her from mental afflictions of the humans and their desire for better prospects and perfection.

Goddess Kali perhaps thinks along these lines when she converts *Hayavadana* into a complete horse instead of making him a human. However, her teasing attitude remains when she does not take away the human voice.

Hayavadana's mother was a beautiful princess of Karnataka who in her folly and strange liking for a horse ends up marrying him. She spends a good fifteen years with him and one fine day instead of a horse she finds a wonderful celestial being. The love of human being restores this horse to his original self. While he should have been thankful to the princess he curses her and converts her into a mare on her refusal to accompany him to his heavenly abode. He disappears leaving her to her fate. These instances can be cited for indifference and apathy of the super towards the lesser mortals.

His invocation is essential for the successful of the play. However, he himself is the embodiment of imperfection and incompleteness. He is described as an elephant's head on a human body, a broken tusk and a cracked belly. It remains a mystery that this very *vakratundamahakaya* with his crooked face and distorted body is the lord of master of success and perfection. It is not our job to understand either this mystery or try to unravel it, nor is it within our power to do so. Our duty is merely to pay homage to the elephant headed being and get on with our play. This god of incompleteness and imperfection is accepted without questions where as others are ridiculed. Towards the end of the Bhagavatha thanks lord Ganesha for fulfilling the desires of a grandfather, a child and a horse. Interestingly the Bhagavatha recommends *Hayavadana* to Kali and not to lord Ganesha.

But the comic touch is seen when Padmini transposes their heads, giving Devadatta Kapila's body and Kapila Devadatta's. This act reveals the ambiguous technique of this play. M.K. Naik commented on the technique that "Karnad does not successfully in investing the basic conflict in the play with the required

intensity, but his technical experiment with an indigenous dramatic form here is a triumph which opened up fresh lines of fruitful exploration for the Indian English play wright".

Goddess Kali is "terrible" in appearance but is given all the characteristics of a human being.

Goddess Kali plays a vital role in *Hayavadana* . She fulfills human desire half way. Her blessing acts in a strange manner.

Conclusion

The present play *Hayavadana* Karnad created gods and goddesses to survive the play. It shows the clearly introducing with Ganesha the lord, Kali, mount Chitrakoot. Even though they did not give completeness for human being. We may see their blessings in a strange manner.

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