

RELATIONSHIP ISSUES IN KARNAD'S YAYATI; A STORY RETOLD**Dr. Shibani Basu Dubey**

Asstt. Professor & Head

Department of PG Study in English

Mata Gujri Mahila Mahavidyalaya (Auto.)

Civic Centre, Marhatal, JBP.

Dr. Vineeta Kaur Saluja

Principal

Mata Gujri Mahila Mahavidyalaya (Auto.)

Civic Centre, Marhatal, JBP.

Abstract: - Yayati Karnad's first play was written in 1961. It is based on an episode in the Mahabharata, where Yayati, one of the ancestors of the Pandavas, is given the curse of premature old age by his father-in-law, who is incensed by Yayati's infidelity. Yayati would be able to redeem this curse only if someone was willing to exchange his youth with him. It is his son Puru, who finally offers to do this for his father. The play examines the moment of crisis that Puru's decision sparks and the dilemma it presents for Yayati, Puru and Puru's Young wife.

Keywords:- Turmoil, Existentialist, Moral transgression, Myth, Complexity, Human relationship, Revolt, New Woman, Morality, Responsibility, Sensibility.

Introduction

Karnad's first play Yayati was an unexpected outcome of the intense emotional turmoil he experienced while preparing for his trip to England for further studies. The play reflects his mental condition at that time as a self-conscious existentialist drama on the theme of responsibility. Karnad accepts the impact of the existentialist writers on his play. Yayati, the protagonist of the play, who was cursed to old age for his moral transgression, wishes to exchange his old age for money, land and even a part of his kingdom.

In Yayati, Karnad has taken the traditional Puranic theme but has given a fresh interpretation to it. The play has pioneered a style, which blends the elements of indigenous theatre, such as 'Yakshagana' and remarkably modern western sensibility. It is a page from the history of the unknown past but the problem discussed in the play is most modern one. Karnad exploits myth. But the function of myth is to transcend its own factual core by magnifying it, elaborating upon it, refining it and then enriching itself at each telling and retelling. The myth of Yayati has been reported time and again. It traverses the generations; it has liberated itself from time frames and spatial constraints. But Karnad is

the first person to use this myth in theatre within the three unites of time, space, and action. In this way universal and most modern qualities of this myth have been exposed to the audience.

Yayati reveals the existentialist view that each man is what he chooses to be or makes himself. Karnad places the individual at the centre of his picture of the world. Karnad reinterprets an ancient Indian myth from the Pauranic past to make a statement in the form and structure he found in the Western playwrights. The play was not about contemporary life but about an ancient Indian myth from the Mahabharat.

Yayati has the maximum number of women characters. There is the queen Devayani with her maid, cum-friend, Sharmishtha, one more maid, Swaranlata. Chitrlekha arrives as daughter-in-law of the Bharata dynasty. Two male characters are Yayati and Puru. B.V. Karanth's words are quotable here:

Discussion

"In Yayati every character seems to carry his/her own complexity. Women in the Mahabharata, are always a subversive voice, they are dumb. Women were not permitted to decide for themselves. This thing has been

beautifully expressed through the character of Sutradhara. He comes on the stage followed by female Sutradhara with her hands tied with a rope. She does not speak. It is only the male Sutradhara who narrates. A clue has been given about the theme of the play.¹

The presence of dumb female Sutradhara, may be symbolic of powerlessness. The poetic rendering of the male Sutradhara gives an idea of Devayani's position in the palace. Karanth's opinion about Devayani is that she wanted to be wife of Yayati only. She succeeds and Sharmishtha is envious of this success. The point is a clear one. Women in the Mahabharata are endeavouring to be related to men of status only, which gives them social power. Everything was to be understood in male terms. Devayani is wife of Yayati and Chitralekha is wife of Puru. Sharmishtha had no male support so she strove for one. The situation has a parallel with John Osborne's look Back in Anger. In 'Anger', Alison is as passive as Devayani is this play. Sharmishtha is as outspoken as Helena is in 'Anger'. Parallel could be stretched a little more. While Jimmy in 'Anger' is frustrated for employment and materialistic development so is Yayati in the play of the same name. Puru and cliff are passive while women of 'Anger' are in full accommodation with males, women of Yayati are a mixed lot. But they share one thing and that is the fire but the fire never went against the patriarchal pattern of society. Sharmishtha's hatred of Devayani could be seen in her statement:

"Yayati asked your name only after your marriage? Even a prostitute's name is asked before hand! If you were not Shukracharya's daughter he would have left you there, without bothering about your virginity, he would have passed you by." (Act.II) Actually, Yayati's quest for the power of youthfulness remains dominant in his nature.

Throughout the play, Devayani-Sharmishtha clash of power remains dominant. Devayani doesn't want Sharmishtha in the palace and frankly asks her to leave the palace. Thus their childhood friendship has been turned into power politics

because they try to be well positioned in the male-dominated world.

Sharmishtha does not accord proper respect to Devayani because she knows too well that Yayati married Devayani as she was the daughter of Shukracharya who could bless him with immortality. Sharmishtha tells this things, "Who does not want to be immortal? He accepted you in the hope of immortality." (Act.II) As Donne Byrne defines it as "the desire to control other action, to determine their fate. It is often fused with prestige want."²

The lines seems to be symbolically profound since the male immortality lies in hands of the female even then men cannot be subdued as Yayati does not subdue to Devayani. A woman bestows power to man yet she herself remains powerless.

The male dominance is apparent in the story of the Swaranlata. She accepts a lie to please her husband. Her's is the most heart-rending condition. Better to mention her own lines.

"I was the only daughter of my father. I used to offer food to a poor Brahmin. He taught me. The Brahmin was learned, intellectual. He was afraid that people would laugh at him for teaching a young Brahmin girl for a meal. He used to come after the night lamps were lighted. After spending the night he used to go in the dawn. I read, grew-up, got married. My husband was the best among the thousands. For my happiness he laboured days and nights. He showered extreme love on me. Always addressing me 'My Swaru'. Without the permission of Swaru he never shifted a straw." (Act.V)

"One day he came to know about that poor Brahmin teacher of mine. There was seed of suspicion in his mind. I swore, requested. My husband had pardoned me had he got some justification for his suspicion? Suspicion increased like an incurable disease. It was not possible to remove this suspicion. With the passing of time his suspicion increased. Seeing him restless in the bed throughout the night pained me. In spite of all this his love towards me was least lessened. I tried to rescue him from his pathetic condition. He

wanted to remove the red cobweb of suspicion. Even he himself tried to forget it but could not. He went with the king to the war. Tried to avenge me by sharing the bed with other women, searched pleasure in wine. He could not attain peace, nor could he forget that Swaru is innocent. Started searching within self. Suffering, hatred and repentance made his life a big disease. How could I hate her? My love kept increasing. But with two psyches his life became a burden. Ultimately for the sake of his peace I thought to do something. I shiver with the remembrance of that agony. Death was better than that, dear lady. Emancipation lies in death only. That night when my husband was again restless in his sleep, I awoke him and accepted that lie of the violation of my virginity by that poor Brahmin as truth.” (Act.IV)

To accept a lie, which nourishes upon life-blood seems to be more suicidal. But women often do that to feel satisfied in the satisfaction of their husbands. Swaranlata seems to be the most sacrificing character in the play. She does not commit suicide to enrol her resistance like Chitrlekha in the same play nor does she prefer uncertainty like Nora Helmer of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1982). She burns in agony moment by moment.

Yayati has been written under the influence of the existentialists like Sartre and Camus. In an interview Karnad expresses:

“I was excited by the story of Yayati. This exchange of ages between the father and son which seems to me terribly powerful and terribly modern. At the same time I was reading a lot of Sartre and the existentialists. This consistent harping on responsibility which the existentialist indulge in suddenly seemed to link up with the story of Yayati.”³

The existentialist version of reality and reality of man-woman relationship is beautifully presented in the play. In Yayati's premature old age; which is the result of a curse by Shukracharya, has expressed the problem of the existence and seems to be closer to Camus and Sartre. In the words of Bertrand Russell, “between men and animals, there are various differences; some intellectual and some emotional. One of the chief

emotional differences is that some human desires, unlike those of animals, are essentially boundless and incapable of complete satisfaction.”⁴

Puru very keenly accepts the curse of senility inflicted on Yayati, his father. He offers to accept the curse not that Yayati is worth sacrifice but because there is a sort of longing in Puru to escape the world of relation. Puru seems to be frightened of human relationship. It becomes clearer that he accepted the curse in a sort of dislinking for the world. Puru seems to be passive towards the thing to which Yayati is attracted. ‘Binary opposition’ in the play is remarkable; Puru is excessively reluctant towards the worldly achievement and physical pleasure, contrary to it Yayati is fascinated by worldly pleasures and achievement. Devayani is passive in her claim to Yayati, whereas Sharmishtha is aggressive in her claim, what though illegal. The foil carries on with the characters of Chitrlekha and Swaranlata also. Swaranlata sacrifices her right to speak truth for the peace and pleasure of her husband. Whereas Chitrlekha offers supreme sacrifice to put her say, what though in favour of patriarchy. B.V. Karanth's words deserve mention.

“The character of Chitrlekha is a very remarkable one. There are only two suicides in the Mahabharata. Both the suicides are to bring some point to light. The one is of Amba and other of Chitrlekha. Chitrlekha prefers to kill herself because she has been denied the right of conceiving the would-be prince of the Bharata dynasty....”⁵

Chitrlekha is the most rebellious character in the play. She is even greater than Sarmishtha in her revolt. Sarmishtha's main reason of grunt is not any male but her own friend, Devayani. She has been brought-up with Devayani, helped her in every way since she was the daughter of a poor Brahmin. And Devayani has got in her a refuge from her desertion by her former love, Kaksha. Multiplicity of relationship has been justified. Whereas Devayani has given a romantic escape to her from a constantly nagging world for her Rakshas family. Sharmishtha helps her in forgetting Kaksha. But this friendship does

not last- long. Ultimately Devayani taunts Sarmishta for her Rakshas family, as a result Sarmishta pushed her into a well. Yayati who help her left hand, which meant marriage, as the popular believe of the time, rescued Devayani. But Yayati rescues Sarmistha, while she was to take poison, by holding the same hand. Thus Sarmishta has equal right of claim on him. Contemporariety of the play is wonderfully depicted in Chitralkha- Yayati dialogue. Chitralkha is not a modern woman but she is endowed with energy, which she tries to use for a place in a male-dominated world.

Patriarchy has been justified by Yayati when he consoles

Chitralkha by saying that she should accept the 'old' Puru happily to oblige "Bharata family. When she refuses, he exercise his authority as her father-in-law and as a king. The male has voice, presence, and power, whereas the female is silent, absent and powerless. Women are supposed to be taught to repress their desire. Thus when Chitralkha refuses, Yayati exercise his authority as her father-in-law and as a king and orders her to obey him, because he expected that patriarchy would speak through her but she is a bit away from the others. Her own words deserve mention here:

"Chitralkha sees Yayati as a male only, a male belonging to Bharata dynasty." (Act-V) She says that she cannot wait for years for her husband to come back to his youth. Life does not move with the calendar. Her own statement is quotable here, "The life of a human being does not move with the calendar, but with the argument and exposes the reality with a statement, which is most postmodern in assertion:

"When I married Puru Raj I did not know him. I married his youth, his masculinity to make me conceive the prince of the Chandra dynasty. You have sucked all that. Now he cannot move without a support, his eyes cannot bear the light of a lamp. The attributes I have married with are no more with him but... But those attributes are with you." (Act. VI)

She wanted the power of "motherhood," which make s a woman powerful to certain extent in the male dominated society. Chitralkha thinks Yayati as the man who is bestowed with masculinity and authority. She offers herself to Yayati he is shocked. He rebukes her and accuses her of harbouring such low thoughts. But she feels a sense of incompleteness and a vacuum within 'herself'. She feels meaningless since meaning is given by the counterpart that is femininity finds expression through masculinity and vise versa. Chitralkha seems to be in search of a man who would define her and provide her some recognition in a society ruled by males.

She seems to be 'New woman' not in the sense that she challenged the social obligation and moral laws. She knows her own mind and also knows to express her thoughts. She says that morality is the fabrication of the human mind. In this statement she is very close to absurdists. Her own words should be mentioned here:

"Morality is the restriction imposed by common people in favour of self-defense. Their plans are made so that the new born-babes may not be as directionless and foundationless as the trees and plants are in a heavy storm. We should be extraordinary. Why should we put on shackles of the morality made by ancestors." (Act. IV)

Her rebellion is very much like that of western absurdists, who also thought that morality is human fabrication. Chitralkha's approach to life is an integrated one. Ugliness, destruction, beauty, and creation for her are the part of the truth. She remains a rebellious figure within the male dominated world. Yayati, it seems, exploits female community for the cheap sense of 'self'. Sharmishtha accuses Yayati:

"You have destroyed her life. You didn't listen to me. You had the desire to be young... this is the foundation of your future life. One woman (Chitralkha) became a ghost, the second (Devayani) a mad person and the third (Sharmishtha) a fallen woman." (Act.V)

Even though the play is motivated by his/her own concept of the opposite sex, they

do, consequently try to seek their identity and being within those parameters. It is true that their quest for completeness and power is achieved through each other, yet the passage of time had resulted in changes in situation and character make it at least allusive, temporary if not impossible.

Girish Karnad's *Yayati* retells the age-old story of the mythological king who is his longing for eternal youth sought to borrow the vitality of his own son. Karnad has borrowed the myth from the Mahabharata and other puranas. The Mahabharata story runs thus: Yayati was one of the six sons of king Nahusha. Devayani, whose love for Kacha remained unrequited, marries Yayati to spite Sharmishtha for whom she nurses childhood jealousy, Sharmishtha is deeply in love with Yayati and subjects herself to a lot of physical and mental torture for love. A son is born to her out of her clandestine liaison with Yayati. Yayati blinded by his insatiable thirst for sensual pleasures, dreads old age, Puru, Sharmishtha's son, offers to exchange his youth for the age of his father. Enlightened now, Yayati gives up the throne and retires to forest to lead a life of renunciation with Devayani and Sharmishtha.

Girish Karnad has given this traditional tale a new meaning and significance highly relevant in the context of life today. The symbolic them of Yayati's attachment to life and its pleasures and also his final renunciation is beautifully depicted. Karnad's originality lies in working out the motivation behind Yayati's ultimate choice. 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.

The purpose and them of the play are revealed through the character of the Sutradhara. As the play opens, the Sutradhara informs the audience that it is a mythical play – a page from the history of the unknown past. The characters, the incidents and circumstances are related to the old

times. However, the reality depicted in the play is applicable to modern times as well.

The Sutradhara says that neither a scholar nor an ordinary person can escape the burden of responsibility wherein lies the joy of life. Whether it is an old man in search of lost youth or a saint lost in the darkness or the mute actress following him – everyone carries a tree of responsibility all along one's life journey and finally hangs from it. The Sutradhara brings forth the theme of responsibility.

“Sometimes when we are walking along a path we see two paths in front of us. We can take only one road and feel what we are fulfilling our life's purpose. However we are always conscious of the inaudible voice, which says: What would have happened if we had walked on the other road... Yet let the untrodden road be untrodden and let its secret remain buried. Let us stick to the morals of the grandmother's stories that we head in our childhood. This is the sad story of our life.” (Act.I)

The play starts on a quiet note, with Swarnalata complaining to Devayani against Sharmishtha. Though Devayani defends Sharmishtha we soon learn of the on-going conflict between the two. Sharmishtha does not accord proper respect to Devayani because she knows too well that Yayati married the latter as she was the daughter of Shykracharya who could bless him with immortality. When Sharmishtha and Devayani have an argument Sharmishtha tells Devayani.

“Yayati hopes for only one thing: nectar to be immortal. Who does not want to be immortal? He accepted you in the hope of immortality. As soon as he came to know that you were Devayani, he had an urge to conquer death.” (Act.II)

Sharmishtha brings turmoil in the life of Yayati. It is because of her that Devayani falls into the well and Yayati appears on the Act and saves her. That is what Yayati intends when he says: “You pushed Devayani into the well, and hence this crisis. I saved her out an caught in the crisis. Didn't you have an atom of humanness when you did this?” (Act.II)

Yayati knows that his problems are due to Sharmishtha's presence in the palace but he doesn't have the heart to tell Sharmishtha to go away. Even Devayani does not do so any Yayati is conscious of this. The crisis in the life of Yayati is precipitated by his refusal to part with Sharmishtha. Devayani doesn't want Sharmishtha in the palace and bluntly asks her to leave the palace. But Yayati does not agree to this because he is under the complete powers and watches of Sharmotha. Obviously he is not able to come out at his spell. Thus she holds power over Yayati.

Despite the on-going conflict between Devayani and Sharmishtha. Devayani does not order the latter to go away from the palace. This she is the one who is responsible for Sharmishta's presence in the palace. When the crisis in the life of Yayati comes, instead of owning up her responsibility, Devayani leaves the palace. She refuses to yield and the result is the curse of premature old age on Yayati.

When Yayati learns that Shukracharya has cursed him with old age, he does not accept the responsibility of what he has done. He accuses Sharmishtha for this. The curse demoralizes Yayati. He refuses to believe that his son, Puru, would be of any help in saving him from the curse. Yayati loses control on him and does not know how to handle the situation.

Sharmishtha tries to pacify Yayati by asking him to accept what has come his way. Yayati gets violent and refuses to accept old age. He remains adamant. He says:

" I am trying to hold back my past. I cannot believe that it was here that I used to have fun with my queens. I competed with time... I enjoyed day and night the happiness and sadness of numberless queens. I found greater pleasure in their crying than in their laughing. That is why I intentionally irritated them. " (Act.IV)

He goes to the extent of saying that Puru must be celebrating the occasion for it gives him an opportunity to assume the mantle of the King immediately. Karnad's Yayati speaks a lot against Puru in the presence of Sharmishta. He can do this

because in Karnad's play, Puru is not Sharmishtha's son as in the Mahabharata but son of another wife of Yayati.

When Puru comes back and informs that Yayati's curse can be redeemed if some young person accepted his old age, Yayati is jubilant. He fails to understand the seriousness of his actions and accuses Sharmishtha and Puru of not being happy in his happiness.

When Puru informs Yayati that nobody is ready to accept his old age, the latter does not believe it. Yayati thinks that all his subjects would come forward and readily accept his old age. It is Sharmishtha who brings him to his senses:

"Why should they accept the result of your actions? Sins and good deeds are not money, which can be given and taken back... Do not beg any insane person or a hermit to transfer your curse to him. Let us quietly go to the forest." (Act.V)

Yayati cannot believe his ears and protests. Yayati dreads old age and the decrepitude it brings. He feels very hurt when nobody comes forward to take upon himself the curse of old age. He is ready to give whatever one wants in return. He even proposes to take back his old age after five or six years. Everybody is at his wit's end to make Yayati accept the responsibility for his action. Puru also asks Yayati to accept his old age and to the forest.

Old age symbolizes powerlessness and Yayati wants power and youth. Yayati cries bitterly and with folded hands looks at Puru. Puru decides to accept the curse of senility inflicted on his father. When Puru proposes that the curse given to Yayati should be transferred to him. Sharmishtha tries to dissuade him saying that pride of sacrifice is also a kind of poison. Pride gives of false sense of power. In "Lordship and Bondage", Hegel suggest that human beings acquire identity only through the recognition of others, that each self must have before it another self in and through which it secures its identity, each seeks to exert control of power over the other. Sharmishtha then reminds him of his

responsibility towards his wife. But Puru doesn't desist from his decision.

Puru offers to accept the curse even though he tells Sharmishtha that Yayati is not worthy of her self-sacrificing love. Puru feels that he is not making a sacrifice: "Not pride but joy. I want to know the inner meaning of that. I want to know what the power was that gave birth to my ancestors." (Act.IV) Suddenly Puru starts feeling weak and is about to fall when Sharmishtha helps him. When asked by Sharmishtha what has happened? Puru replies that it is the curse, it is the sorrow of new life.

Thus Yayati succeeds in transferring his old age and his sins to Puru, but in the process he experiences shattering disillusionment and loss of faith. The argument that he puts forward is that his people need him as a king and therefore he is doing this. But to his own self, it is clear that this is not truth. The final recognition of the horror of the situation comes to Yayati through Chitrlekha, Puru's young wife, who finds reality too much to bear and kills herself. She poisons herself in order to be relieved from the miserable condition in which she has been living. The power of one conscience is the ultimate power to distinguish between right and wrong. In "Of Truth", Bacon has said that the ultimate power is truth and when one is truthful one stays in the vantage ground because the conscience is clear.⁶

When Swaranlata gives Chitrlekha the news that Puru has accepted his father's old age, she is absolutely stunned.

She adds that old age as a curse has come to him at the right time, otherwise she would have cursed her husband and her luck like a mad person. Now she can curse her foolishness. When Puru asks of forgiveness. Chitrlekha replies: "Do not talk like this. The fault was mine. I did not know about your greatness. I had never thought that I would get such reward." (Act.V)

Puru wants her support for the responsibility he has undertaken. Chitrlekha gladly extends her support. But when she sees the face of old Puru, she realizes what has

befallen her. She gets frightened. She curses herself for not being as great as her husband, for turning her husband out. She request Puru to reconsider his decision but to no avail. Even Yayati tries to console Chitrlekha.

He advises Chitrlekha to behave in a way as behoves the daughter-in-law of the Bharata family. He tries to console her by assuring her that he would soon take back the curse on himself. He asks her to accept the 'old' Puru happily for which sacrifice the Bharata family will always feel obliged to her.

Chitrlekha holds Yayati responsible for pushing Puru towards death. Yayati tries to idealize Chitrlekha's sacrifice. He asks Chitrlekha to rise above petty considerations and be a great woman. But Chitrlekha does not yield to his argument: "Cowards and liars will always argue. With your arguments. You have woven a net around me." (Act.IV)

To come out of this net, Chitrlekha puts a proposal before Yayati. She would like Yayati to take the place of Puru in her life so that she can bear a child of the family.

When Chitrlekha offers herself to Yayati, the latter is shocked. Chitrlekha cannot see any light in her future life. Chitrlekha can think of only one solution to this problem, suicide. However, after taking poison, Chitrlekha is not willing to die. She behaves in an irresponsible manner yet pleads to be saved. She wants to survive because the love to lives is very powerful. When Yayati sees the dead body of Chitrlekha he repents but that even the fire of poison has not finished his desire to live and Sharmishtha sarcastically calls Chitrlekha's death as the first victory of Yayati's new life.

V.S. Khandekarm, the eminent Marathi novelist, also used the Yayati myth in his novel Yayati, Published in 1959, In his novel, Khandekar made Yayati a representative of modern common man who is spite of receiving much happiness in life remains restless and discontented. The mythical Yayati ran after sensual pleasures but Khandekar's Yayati runs after all kinds of materialistic pleasures- cars, bungalows, fat bank accounts, beautiful clothes, dance, and music. Though the tale is taken from the

Puranas, Khandekar's Yayati is a modern man.

In Khandekar's novel, "Puru's sacrifice brings a new, liberating awareness to Yayati, Kama blinds Yayati temporarily but his dharma brings him to his senses."⁷ In Karnad's play, it is Chitrlekha's suicide that brings Yayati to his senses and he owns up responsibility for his actions.

He proposes to Sharmishtha to accompany him to the forest before the nightfall: "We should wash our sins by doing penance in the forest. I have spent my youth in this city but will spend my old age in the forest." (Act.II) When Chitrlekha dies, Puru is stunned but does not cry. It is only when he regains his youth that he repents for what he has done.

Conclusion

Yayati Karnad's first play was written in 1961. It is based on an episode in the Mahabharata, where Yayati, one of the ancestors of the Pandavas, is given the curse of premature old age by his father-in-law, who is incensed by Yayati's infidelity. Yayati would be able to redeem this curse only if someone was willing to exchange his youth with him. It is his son Puru, who finally offers to do this for his father. The play examines the moment of crisis that Puru's decision sparks and the dilemma it presents for Yayati, Puru and Puru's Young wife.

If analyzed from the point of view of power conflict. In Yayati, this power conflict is in personal relationships, as curse for Yayati proves. Power is associated with youth and vice versa. Bacon says that every body loves a rising sun and not a setting sun i.e. youth is admired. In this essay "Of Friendship", Bacon has cited this philosophy.⁸ This might be again related to man's finding ways for elixir of youth. Many stones, many black magic is done to revive youth. The concept of "Amartva" in Indian mythology is one such.

Thus Karnad's play Yayati is a "self-consciously existentialist drama on the theme of responsibility."⁹ At the end of the play, Yayati takes back the old age from his son and Puru has to witness the death of his wife. This

is catharsis in the drama as per Aristotle and this gives sustenance to life.¹⁰

Girish Karnad's ability to universalize the individual and social predicament through the medium of drama has always been recognized. Although rooted in Indian history and mythology, his plays at the same time convey "a strong and an unmistakable Western philosophical sensibility."¹¹ The existentialist crisis of modern man, the incessant need for power and glory, is conveyed through strong individuals who are locked in intense psychological and philosophical conflicts.

REFERENCE

- 1.B.K. Karnath, Interviewed by Manoj Kumar Pandey (Second Session), Allahabad, Sept. 19,2001.
- 2.Dnne Byrne, Essay on Freedom and Power (London: Thomas and Hudson, 1956), 33-336.
- 3.Jaydipsinh K. Dodiya, "Girish Karnad: The Man and the Writer", Indian English Drama: Critical Perspectives. Ed. Jaydipsinh K. Dodiya and K.P. Surendran. (New Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 2000) 4.
- 4.Bertrand Russell, Power: A New Social Analysis (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1957) 7.
- 5.B.V. Karanth ,23
- 6.F.G. Selby, Ed. Bacon's Essays, (Madras: Macmillan. Ed. 1985), p.55
- 7.<wwwcc.murdoch.edu.au/readingroom/litserve/SPAN/36/Rama.html>visited on 22nd Febraury 2002.
- 8.F.G. Selby, 72.
- 9.Jaydipsinh K. Dodya, 32.
- 10.S.H. Butcher, Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Arts (New Delhi: Kalyani Publications, 1987) 87,
- 11.Sonal P. Chandervarkar, "Girish Karnad's Tughlaq: A Doomed Dreamer's Dilemma" Indian English Drama: Critical Perspective. In Dodya and Surendran, Ed.