

Dramatic Techniques Used in Wedding Album and Boiled Beans on Toast by Girish Karnad

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Abstract: In the field of literature for giving additional value, enhancing quality work and fulfilling the objective of task, a writer uses techniques for presenting his narrative. As Girish Karnad belongs to the narrative genre - drama, a deliberate analysis of the dramatic technique is the nucleus of this article. Dramatic technique is an art as a drama is not only for reading but also most of the time written for enactment. It enhances the spectator's interest in the play as well as enchanted him. In the field of literature, Karnad's works have been explored from various angles. But still with every new reading, they come out with a new exciting knowledge or angle. The article explores Girish Karnad's selected plays titled *Wedding Album* and *Boiled Beans on Toast* with the perspective of analyzing dramatic techniques used in.

Key Words: Karnad, Dramatic technique, drama, *Wedding Album*, *Boiled Beans on Toast*.

1. INTRODUCTION: One of the revivalists of Indian theatre, Girish Karnad was Konkani by birth. Like Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sirkar, Mahesh Dattani and many more. Karnad is pioneer playwright in history of Indian theatre. This scholar child of Chitrapur Saraswat Brahmin family primarily penned his plays in Kannada language especially his initial plays and afterwards, they are translated into English. Since childhood, he was interested in folk theatre. He had been a Rhodes scholar at Oxford from 1960 to 1963 and a Bhabha fellow from 1970 to 1972, also a visiting professor and resident scholar at Chicago University for some time. This man of versatile personality was an accomplished actor too, who portrayed a variety of characters not only on stage but also in Indian cinema and small screen. He was the World Theatre Ambassador of the International Theatre Institute, Paris (ITI), and had been anointed sixteen times with fellowship. He was also the recipient of the Padma Bhushan and Jnanpith Award in recognition of his contributions to arts and literature. His collection of plays includes *Yayati*, *Tughlaq*, *Hayavadana*, *Nagamandala*, *Tale-Danda*, *The Fire and the Rain*, *Bali: The Sacrifice*, *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*, *Two Monologues: Flower and Broken Images*, *Wedding Album*, *Boiled Beans on Toast* and *Crossing to Talikota*.

In the field of literature, Karnad's works have been explored from various angles. But still with every new reading, they come out with a new exciting knowledge or angle. As Girish Karnad belongs to the narrative genre - drama, a deliberate analysis of the basic elements or techniques of drama are nucleus of this article. Drama is an ancient narrative art. In favour of this statement John Priestly comments:

Although the dramatist may also be a man of letters, capable of producing novels, poems, essays, criticism, I believe that drama is not simply a branch of literature, but a separate little art, with its own peculiar values and technicalities. (qtd. in John 661)

It is a separate little art, as it is not only for reading but it is meant to be performed. By applying special techniques, a dramatist makes it alive for theatre production. Thus, it has a different design than other narrative genres. As Girish Karnad is an Indian English dramatist, the theory of Western and Indian drama would be applicable for analysis. The ancient Greek scholars like Plato, Aristotle, Longinus, Horace etc., the English dramatists and scholars like Henrik Ibsen, Shakespeare, Bertolt Brecht, Gustav Freytag etc. and the Indian theorists and dramatists like Bharata Muni, Anandavardhana, Bhamaha, Kuntaka, Abhinavagupta, Dandin, Dhananjaya etc. are the popular names who contributed the most in the genre of drama. Among them Aristotle's *Poetics* and Bharata Muni's *Natyashastra* are the major theories for assimilating dramatic techniques.

Aristotle, known as father of techniques in Western drama, was a Greek philosopher, disciple of Plato and the teacher of Alexander the great. His theory of dramatic art has been very influential since ancient time. Although there have been several experiments have occurred with the new elements or techniques, the reference of his theory has become an inevitable part of a dramatic -research. Aristotle's *Peripoeietikes* (Poetics), a treatise on literary work, evaluates drama as a scientific analysis not as mere an activity for pleasure. For him, pleasure in drama would not be understood as a 'hedonistic satisfaction but rather as the result of an underlying intellectual activity or experience' (Landa 3). The dramatic structure, for Aristotle, is the point of consideration. He classified drama into two parts - tragedy and comedy. Aristotle defines tragedy as an imitation of human action. For writing this scientific and systematic piece of art, Aristotle propounded six elements of drama and their techniques. These elements are - Plot, Character, Thought, Diction, Spectacle and Song. Plot mentioned as 'mythos' in *Poetics* by Aristotle, is the foundation of drama. It is also known as structure, scheme or plan of incidents or events used for presenting a narrative. Aristotle opines that 'The plot, then, is the first principle and as it were the soul of tragedy' (Landa 17). He considers the action more significant than the other components while presenting a drama. The action is presented through the plot. A plot, in *Poetics* has two important factors - first and most significant is its three unities and second is its type. A well-constructed plot has unity of action which must have proper beginning, middle and end. It represents action as a whole. Every event or incident should be connected and related properly. Thus, unity of action reveals the causal connection of incidents and their direction towards a single end. Aristotle's rule about the 'magnitude' or 'length' of a plot decides a certain size of the action and events. The plot should not surpass the length that cannot be retained by human memory. Too long or too short a plot disturbs the unity of action. For maintaining these unities, Aristotle prefers the chorus. The play begins with the introduction by the chorus. Throughout the play, it performs as a fastener of the events or scenes which are not going to perform and can't be acted on stage. Although not much favouring of sub-plot, Aristotle divides mythos into two kinds - simple and complex. Simple plot has a whole action or events without any discovery or the turning point in the fortune of central character who moves forward continuously towards the disaster (catastrophe). On the other hand, a complex plot performs the opposite than previous (simple plot). It is English drama which prefers the woven story of main and sub-plot.

When Aristotle states that the tragedy can be possible without character but not without action, it doesn't mean that a play can be performed without agents or actors. Through these words, he tries to say that in a play, the action must be acted with perfection. Character delineation is not required to be over magnificent. The character cannot act without reference to the situation in which they are placed. Since he states at a point that character refers to actor's qualities in the play, and not its physical appearance. Here quality refers to actors' total personality. He writes that 'character is formed through action, and is revealed through actions' (Sen et al. 130). For Aristotle the character should be 'better than the ordinary man' (Sen et al. 64) and is not required to be perfect. The portrayal of character must be balanced between reality and over imagination, very close to life. He or she should be average than ordinary. Landa in his article comprehends that Aristotle sets the rule of idealization of the character. This idealization provides to the character a sense of universalization through which a character would take action 'according to the laws of necessity or probability' (26).

The third element, 'Thought' (dianoia) stands for rhetorical elements in Aristotle's *Poetics*. Language is the medium of expression for revelation of thought in a play. The character by producing several emotions through the speech, proves or disproves, persuades and convinces something to others. It is speech which makes the thing trivial or significant in the play. As far as diction is concerned for Aristotle, it is the appropriate selection and ordering of words and images in literary works. He appreciates the role of poetic inspiration and natural talent in writing. For him, Metaphor is a god-gifted talent, which embraces a new design while learning.

About the style of poet, Aristotle opines that it should be good and above the average - not so simple or not so complicated. As Spectacle refers to visual aids like set, costumes, props etc., it is considered as representation aspect of drama. But it is not significant for Aristotle as he opines that art and pleasure are the products of mind and are not aroused through eyes. Still, he doesn't neglect the superb visual effects that are practised by Greek dramatists during the performance of drama. Although not much discussed in *Poetics*, 'Melody is the greatest of all the pleasurable accessories of the tragedy' (Bywater 39). In his view, this component 'Melody' (melopoeia) includes music and lyrical compositions in a play. Aristotle opines that chorus has no lyrical function, rather it helps in the action.

For Aristotle all forms of art have a common principal 'Imitation'. Imitation is not mere copying something, but in *Poetics*, it is creativity. Drama is a mode of manner for presenting this imitation. The reproduction of life's emotions and experiences of human beings are the main objects of imitation during a dramatic performance. Thus, in *Poetics*, the word 'Drama' is a name of an art given to those poems which represent action.

As far as Indian dramatic tradition is concerned, Bharata Muni's chef-d'oeuvre *Natyashastra* is widely regarded as the genesis of Indian dramatic technique. Any research on Indian drama cannot be accomplished without analyzing *Natyashastra*. Like *Poetics*, it might have been completed in written form by several scholars or pupils. Thus, Bharata Muni without any dispute was the first who established the dramatic technique divinely. It is believed that dramatic art in India is originated earlier than Greek drama. It has its own unique and glorious technique. *Natyashastra* has various elements and has the entire structure of a play along with theatre organization.

In *Natyashastra*, 'Bhavas' (emotions) are categorized into three chief sets. These three categories are further divided into forty-nine emotions. These emotions present the state of human mind. This combination of three bhavas produces 'Rasa' which is the soul of Bharata's theory of drama. There is no play without rasa. "The ultimate goal, purpose of writing, presenting and viewing a play is to experience rasa realization" (Srinivas 25). Hence, Rasa provides aesthetic pleasure. 'Bhava' is its foundation and the elements like dance, colours, make-up, costumes, music, set-up are the tools to generate the rasa. Bharata classified eight types of rasa. They directly appeal to the human heart and mind.

In Sanskrit, Bharata used the word 'Rupa' for 'play'. The literary work that has a visually stylish presentation is known as the 'play'. For Bharata, 'If rasa is the soul of drama, plot is the body of drama' (Tiwari 3). He divides plot (Vastu) into two parts - Adhikarika (principle) and Prasangika (subsidiary or incidental). The former revolves around the primary actions of the hero or drama for achieving the best results through emotions and sentiments and the latter comprises incidental action (as title suggests) which is the part of the main plot and increases its specific effect.

While dealing with the classification of plot, Bharata mentions Ankas (acts of episodes). He allows more than five and less than ten acts in a drama. He, on the basis of different themes or subject matter, lists ten kinds of plays. He uses the word 'Rupa' for play which means the literary work that is in visual presentation. These plays are well designed with its name, functions and production. All these plays can be differentiated by their characters, theme and elements like rasa and bhava. Regarding the play production for dramaturge as well as for the playwright, Bharata imposes that it should be enjoyable for the audience. As regards tragedy, that is Aristotle's masterpiece, Bharata prohibits the death or tragic fall of hero in a play. About the unity of time in a play, Bharata discusses about the duration of time while describing ten kinds of play. For him, an act should revolve around the events of a single day. A duration of time between two acts can be a month or a year which must be indicated through introductory scene. But it should not be more than one year. The place of action, for Bharata, should be India. No foreign locales should be the part of a play. Within Indian territory, the dramatist can shift the place of action. The types of characters are clearly delineated by Bharata into three categories - (1) Uttama (superior), (2) Adhama (inferior) and (3) Madhyama (middle). Bharata states that "one who has control over his senses, is wise, skilled in arts and crafts, well versed in scripture, clever in dealing, honest, gives consolation to the poor, serious, liberal, patient and sacrificing, belong to the superior class of character" (qtd. in Dhawan 81). Madhyama (middle) type of character should be wise, artist, educated, ambitious and polite. The last *Adhama* should be impolite having bad intentions about others, harmful, inhuman, vicious, lazy, thief and treacherous. Bharata's analysis of characters is considered as the mirror of contemporary Indian society which gives the credibility to his theory.

The next element of drama is 'Thought'. In view of Bharata, it is generated in the mind of actor as well as in playwright. It is the thought which, through processing, evokes him to proceed towards action. Speech and dialogues are the medium to put forward this thought in front of the spectators. It is a stimulus for a dramatist's creation. By encouraging his thinking process, it helps in making dramatic art splendid and real. Thought is reflected through the emotions of the character. Bharata calls it Vritti. In order to supply ornamentation to dramatic language, Bharata expresses, figures of speech named 'Alankaras'. It creates an ornamental effect and enhances the beauty of artists' expression. The playwright should not employ unnecessary words, irrelevant and incomplete expressions, vulgar meaning of words, double meaning words. By following these rules, a playwright embellishes his language and evokes different rasa accurately. Bharata states clearly that the language of character should be according to his social and economic position or rank.

Bharata also includes some linguistic devices like monologue (Akashvachana), soliloquy (Almagata), speaking in confidence (Apvaritaka), and concealing the thought (Janantika). All devices aid the spectator to comprehend the situations and reveal the inner emotions of the character. Symbolism is also a major part of Bharata's *Natyashastra*. The symbolism suggests perception and purpose of the playwright for creating his dramatic art.

Bharata gives weightage on audio visual aids which are the essential parts of modern technology. It enhances the effective representation of dramatic art and confirms its successive production. He prefers model work for different objects like carriage, splendid palaces, elephant, weapons etc. Even the description is so micro about beard, hairs and ornaments. About the costumes, Bharata gives priority to different occasion, place and position. For Bharata, it is the

costumes and make up that make a person superior or inferior. To conclude, Bharata's *Natyashastra* is a minute detail of dramatic elements which challenge the other dramatic theories of the world.

There are several Indian dramatists up to 1000 AD who followed dramatic rules posited by Bharata Muni. After the downfall of the classical drama, there was a long blank period due to invasion of several foreign rulers who came in India with their language and artistic influences like Mughals, Parsis, Britishers etc. During this gap from the classical period to the development of modern Indian drama, the regional dramatic art gained a strong foothold in this field with regional local languages and techniques which were influenced by classical dramatic technique. This folk - technique/drama is still alive in Therukkuthu, Yakshagana, Bajans, Krishnattam, Jatra, Tirugala, Harikatha, Koodiyattam, Tamasha, Nautanki etc. The theme of these plays is based on mythology, folk tales and historical incidents. The foreign impact on Indian culture gave a new dimension to dramatic art. Thus, the Indian dramatic technique has undergone transformation due to several invasions and versatile regionality. The emergence of British Raj provided a direct exposure of Western drama to Indian dramatists who began to take interest in English dramatists and their technique that was more or less influenced by Greek drama. Western dramatic writing style has been gone through several changes. It switched many techniques pursuant to time and spectator's choice. The dramatists, for making their plays interesting, implemented various literary devices during enactment. From Shakespear to shaw, Wild, Galsworthy and many more kept switching their style of writing in accordance with time and spectator. Modern playwrights gave weightage to plot, theme and social realism over fantasy. Thus, Indian English dramatic technique is the amalgamation and product of the Sanskrit (classical) dramatic tradition, folk theatre, and western dramatic art.

The post-independence period produces several regional writers. The socio-political situation after colonial period peeps out through the themes of the play. The translations of those regional plays into English give them international acclaim. Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sirkar, Mohan Rakesh, Girish Karnad, Chandrashekhar Kambar, Dharamvir Bharti, Utpal Dutt, G. P. Deshpande, Ratan Thiyam, Habib Tanvir, Mahesh Elkunchwar are prominent dramatists among them. Ratan Thiyam uses mythological theme and presents it in Manipuri folk tradition known as Thang-Ta. He employs Metaphors and juxtaposition of various scenes in flashback technique. Habib Tanvir in his plays adopts modern techniques of theatre and traditional devices. Badal Sirkar, influenced by Grotowski's poor theatre and Schechner's environmental theatre creates his own theatre. They have given their regional flavour to their dramatic technique with a contemporary relevant theme. Among these playwrights, Girish Karnad gains wide readership and establishes Indian English drama on the stage of the world.

The succeeding segment analyses Girish Karnad's dramatic techniques, implemented in the plays selected for the study, on the grounds of above-mentioned theory and critically discusses the unique narrative style of his dramatic writing. The multi-lingual and multi-skilled personality of Girish Karnad was encountered with the genre of drama in his childhood. He accompanied his father to professional 'company natak' plays and with servants, traditional folk form of the play known as *Yakshgana*. Thus, both the techniques influenced Karnad's play writing. With this, his vast reading of Kannada and Marathi literature and gradually English Literature, got imprinted on his mind. Karnad's enchantment with theatre, is genetic inheritance as his parents were also interested in theatre and its techniques. The scene in the play or theatre was discussed in detail at his home. He saw several plays of Shakespeare, Shaw, Strindberg, Anouilh, Sartre, Bertolt Brecht, Camus etc. But his dramatic literary writing was a sudden output of his personality, not an intentional effort or was not systematically planned. As far as Western dramatic influence is concerned, violence of human psyche, revealed in these plays, left an everlasting effect on Karnad's mind. The theme, the techniques of lights used for visual effect and dramatic expression were the new exposure and temptation for Karnad. In his own words 'The new technology was necessarily accompanied by new psychology' (qtd. in Mukherjee 29). For Karnad, 'writing a play is like building a house, what happens to each unit affects the rest of the structure' (qtd. in Mukherjee 29). Asked by Tutun Mukherjee about western influence on his writing, he clearly admits that it impacts the theme, but is not so helpful in dramaturgy. For Karnad, while comparing among western dramas, the European, especially French dramatists like Cocteau and Anouilh are more inspirational than the British English dramatists. French playwrights have chosen the myth for presenting modern life whereas the English plays mostly focus on realistic sets in kitchen sink dramas and drawing room plays of England. For him, theatre should be used as a means for social change. About the various interpretations of the theme or elements used in his play, Karnad states that he did not intentionally indulge into any theory or technique but he wrote as 'the play unfolds and the characters develop'. (qtd. in Mukherjee 44)

Written originally in Kannada language *Wedding Album* (2008) is Karnad's transformation in his dramatic technique and thematic concern. Most of his plays deal with history, folk tales and mythology but *Wedding Album* is launched with an innovative style. As the title of the play suggests the plot refers to a wedding and the word 'Album' is symbolic. It is not a mere book or collection of photographs; it is, for Karnad, a collection of celebrations, experiences, occurrences and emotions during an Indian marriage. Krishna Singh puts Karnad's views about the play:

This play has been, in a sense 30 to 40 years in the making. When his sister got married, he watched the members of his family gathering together, and observed the resultant interpersonal dynamics and tensions. ...he found it a combination of "celebration and anxiety" and tucked it away in his mind, to emerge much later. He didn't want to write it as a "story" play, though, and the form that it has taken now is satisfying to him. (12)

The play is later translated into Kannada by Karnad himself. Lillete Dubey, the director of the play, comments:

Wedding Album is full of sharp, pithy and observant comments. Just because the play is not heavy, it doesn't mean it doesn't have muscle and content. (qtd. Singh 12)

The narrative revolves around the theme of wedding in an urban middle class Nadkarni family. The family is from Karnataka based Saraswat Brahmin community. The members of the family are well educated, traditional cum modern, and liberal in their thoughts. The story moves in a circle on the central axis of Vidula's wedding. Vidula a modern girl, decides to marry an NRI boy Ashwin Panje with whom she met through video chatting. The family is busy in her marriage ceremony. The ceremony which has immense significance in Indian tradition, is not about a tie of two persons and their family but it is full of preparations, customs, celebrations and gathering of relatives as witnesses. Karnad focuses on the anxiety, vibrancy and amusement during this stretched out procedure of an Indian wedding. Pre-wedding and post-wedding happenings are shown to the spectators or readers in the play.

The play has a main plot and various sub plots in it. The main plot is based on Vidula's marriage. With this, Karnad merges the story of the maid Radhabai and her daughter, Rohit and Isabel's love affair, Rohit and Tapasaya's marriage and Hema and Vivan's episode in between. By weaving vividness in the plot, Karnad protects the play from monotony, that makes it interesting for both the reader and the spectator. Structured in nine scenes, the play has regional location Dharwad (a small town in Karnataka). Karnad selects Nadkarni's living room and kitchen for the central place for his play's setting. Karnad beautifully portrays the picture of the living room of the house, which is modelled on the traveller's bungalows of the colonial period. Every minor detail of that room helps the reader to remind a middle class living. The play sets the example of changing attitude of Karnad about western dramatic setting of drawing room plays which are earlier for him not a worthy place for Indian dramatic production and sensitivity. Earlier he believed that kitchen and God's room are the core of Indian family as most of the decisions and activities are connected with these places in India. Other than this, the television production studio, the internet cafe, a local restaurant etc. are also the numerous venues in the play. The narrative is about a modern Indian cultured family embedded with tech-savvy knowledge. The employment of communication technology like computer, internet, video, mobile etc. is the major part of the development of the theme. Regarding this use of technology as a device in the play, Amrit Shrinivasan comments in the foreword of the play:

By making 'distance' technology almost a character in the play, Karnad is able to demonstrate its constant copresence in the contemporary South Indian Brahmin home, street and office, which underwrites the transnational embeddedness of their lives. But the masterstroke lies in linking technology to the very 'arranging' of marriage itself. (Karnad *Wedding Album* xi)

The play opens with the video shooting of Vidula who is introducing her and her family to Ashwin. Through the use of technology, she converses with Ashwin and both of them decide to marry. The cyber-sex chat of Vidula unveils the youngster's hidden sexual urges and its relieving through technology. Amrit Srinivasan compares it to a modern myth 'whose condensed logic straddles both the real and the tech simulated world of today, to help us confront our own mixed up, amoral, craven, unhappy selves' (Karnad *Wedding Album* ix). By writing *Wedding Album*, Karnad answers the blame levied against him that he ignores the contemporary Indian reality in his obsession of history and mythological treatment for contemporary relevance. The play is about changing fundamentalism of a Hindu middle class family. Karnad weaves it in a very simple and entertaining narrative thread. It is a contemporary theme with contemporary characters. Karnad displays a group of people who have a common set of sexual, conjugal, caste, class and age-related conduct. Although the particular caste of the society is mentioned, but his treatment stands for the whole Hindu community and middle-class people. It gives the play a universal appeal. The globalized appeal of the play is not the new feature of Karnad's dramatic technique. Beginning from the small- town Dharwad to USA culture claims his wizardry over narrative command. The NRI mania over Indians, the impact of technology and western culture, the harsh reality of its glittering artificiality, the modern NRI's spiritual crisis due to cultural migration and its spiritual cure through adopting Indian values prove the play didactic for worldwide audience.

The central theme deals with the Indian marriage institution which is woven with several threads like love and trust, adjustments and sacrifices, similarities and differences, respect and duties, customs and modernity. Mrs. Nadkarni

is entangled between traditional marriage custom, its formalities and daughter's wish. She has done lots of sacrifices due to her husband's transferring job. Hema also sacrifices her career for fulfilling her marital duty and in the end Vidula is also going to do the same. They are modern women still confined in women's traditional marital roles. The essence of existentialism can be seen in Vidula's character who through her own determination acts on her will. She takes responsibility of her own decision and decides to save the west from spiritual crisis. Mr. Nadkarni seems to have surrendered to his wife now in old age.

Richness of women characters in the play proves it women centric play. Karnad's understanding of female psyche comes out in the rainbow shades of women characters. They represent Indian mother, daughter, wife, sister, maid and above all they are represented as an individual. While dealing with various themes, Karnad projects the superiority of Indian culture, over western culture. Ashwin Panje, one of the characters in the play, selects a small -town girl for curing his western world generated spiritual crisis. He wants to get his hollowness filled with the goodness of this traditional Indian woman. Regarding this context, Sangeeta Avachar comments:

This is the triumph of Indian philosophy, Indian culture over the developed culture of western world.
(13)

Throughout the play, Karnad sprinkles the Indian essence via his dialogues. Karnad takes NRI mania of Indians as a burning issue in the play. How Indian girls crave for NRI bridegrooms for themselves. Vidula craves for marrying Ashwin because of his residence in USA, even she is ready to surrender her real self.

Neelam Mansingh Choudhry, a theatre director, calls it a humorous play. Throughout the play, Karnad provides some comic relief. The giggling mood of Vidula makes the environment pleasant in the play. The video shoot of Vidula for Ashwin in the beginning, conversation of Hema and Vidula about the incident of raising skirt of their ex-male-cook Naggappa and a fruitless kitchen battle of Mother and Radhabai serve amusement in the play. The reader laughs when he comes to know the fact that the wedding for which everyone is excited and doing preparation with such a swing is not yet fixed. The invitation cards, marriage date and hall, wedding gifts, Vidula's passport and visa are already but the bridegroom is still confused. The dialogue exchanged between Mother and Vidula during the selection of wedding gifts for guests creates fun in the play. It can be considered as a satirical play. In a humorous way, Karnad satirizes on ridiculous customs and worthless expenses of Indian marriage. With these practices people waste money as well as valuable time of people in India. Mrs. Nadkarni comments:

A wedding means expenses there is no getting away from that. (Karnad *Wedding Album* 15)

The play is light in nature yet there are several points which create conflict and tension. It is essential for producing excitement in the reader's mind. The suspense of Rohit and Tapsaya's marriage, the climax of Vidula's marriage and Radhabai's daughter's story, the episode of Hema and Vivan's attraction towards her, are well maintained by Karnad in between the main plot.

Like his other plays, Karnad portrays human relationship in *Wedding Album*. The unique feature in it is their emotional bonding with each other. Although having differences in their perspective, they have the essence of love in their relationships in the Indian context.

The play *Boiled Beans on Toast* appears in 2014. Shanta Gokhale, one of the scholars, writes in the foreword of the play that the city of Bangalore is the chief protagonist in the play as the title itself suggests. It also advocates its theme. According to founding myth, the original name of Bangalore was Bendakaaluru - the place of boiled beans. The myth proclaims that in eleventh century, king Veera Ballala, the great king of the Hoysala empire, lost his way in the jungle during hunting and arrived at a lonely hut in the jungle. The old lady of the house saved the king by serving him boiled beans (benda kaalu in Karnataka). The name of the place is given by the king as thanks giving to the lady. Corrupted by time, the name Bendakaaluru is replaced by Bangaluru and later Bangalore during the colonial period. The word *Toast* is a part of western cuisine. In the title, it symbolizes the western impact. Thus, the play is about Bangalore city which is now collaborating with westernization and has become a boom town. Due to the effect of globalisation, the city has become an economic boon, and hub of opportunity and employment. As a result, Bangalore loaded with population, has been converted into a megacity. But there are pros and cons of this development and its impact on the Indian culture. In this play, Karnad portrays 'the fractured lives of its floating population which occupies a broad social spectrum from the struggler to the street- smart survivor from the small -town aspirant to the elite' (Karnad *Boiled Beans*. vii). Shanta Gokhale observes the play as part of Karnad's objective representation as it departs from nostalgia. 'The play is neither loaded with memories of a golden past, nor does it take a moralistic stand against development' (Karnad *Boiled Beans* vii). Based on the socio-psychological sight of people, this play is just an observation of Bangalore from a dramatist's point of view. The characters are carefully drawn from the crowd of the

city. Karnad, through multiple focuses on human relationships, represents the real landscape of westernized Bangalore with an objective overview. Karnad, as a dramatist, draws attention towards the adversities and dilemma of human life and relationships generated by globalization and universally confronted by people. Fusing irony with humour, Karnad illustrates the modern society and its reality. The Indian traditional values like love, trust, affection, belief, devotion, generosity, forgiveness, respect, peace, humanity, etc. are threatened by emotions like jealousy, selfishness, greed, desires, hatred, ambitions, revenge, distrust, ego, insecurity etc. Modern life is restless and fastened with hollow relationships. Meghana K. in her article writes:

This play is an elaborate social commentary and acts as a constructive aid in understanding the various facets of the society. (343)

Karnad's gallery of characters reminds Shakespearean plays. He depicts the characters of all ages and walks of life. There are teenagers, middle aged, senior citizens as well as people from different economic status. In the play, people from different regions gather in Bangalore. These characters are categorized as businessmen, housewives, working women, domestic helpers, strugglers, ambitious, merry makers, non- IT professionals, frauds, mentally sick etc. Urbanization provides rapid development and dreams to them but no contentment in their life. Other than the major characters, there are some minor characters who are also significant for the purpose of plot development. The whole plot revolves around directly or indirectly Padabidri house, especially encircles the people connected to Anjana Padabidri who can be considered as the protagonist in the play.

The adversities which Karnad exposes are environmental destruction, migration of villagers to the city, disappointments, despair and greed among the modern people. He unveils the social reality. This is not only about Bangalore but also the whole metropolis social system. The drama for Karnad is a means for social change. He, disturbed by social and political corruption, raises several issues indirectly. The alienation of human relationship is also one of the major themes of the play. Padabidri house has a complete family – her old mother, her son, her daughter-in-law, her grandson, are all still lonely. No one has the time for each other.

The dramatic structure of the play is analysed and it is found that it is woven in several individual narratives. The main plot begins with Anjana Padabidri but several sub plots are connected to the people who have some relation with Anjana and Padabidris. The play is neither a tragedy, nor it has any happy ending. These narratives are unresolved conflicts of human life without any climax. All scenes are very vague.

The play has several scenes within two acts. These two acts are divided into eight and nine scenes respectively. The regional setting of the play is Bangalore. The main venue of activities is Padabidri house and other than that the City Race Course, the Cafe Coffee Day, the Police Station, a Mini Apartment, Karimangalla Village, the new extension of the city, the reception room of the Wipro office, Muttu's house etc. are the main settings of the scenes in the play. The play begins dramatically with the cast of characters who are motionless on the stage in a dim light. With the rapid changes in bright lights and colours, the actors gain motion - talking, moving about, fighting, shouting, bumping into each other. In the background, through the use of music and sounds, Karnad adds the effect of hustle and bustle of the metro city. The opening scene introduces Bangalore life as the main theme of the play. Even the concluding lines also display the same. Karnad ends the play with the musical lines of Kunaal 'Big Bang Bangalore is a Big Black Hole!'. (Karnad *Boiled Beans*. 80)

Karnad's passion for myth is revealed through his play *Boiled Beans on Toast*. It signifies his intensity about it. Karnad while conversing with Deepa Rajan for Hindustan Times declares that he fancied Indian myths to acquire the height as Greek myths have in western world and drama. The title of the plays are not mere names but they symbolize and contain the whole theme. The modern approach, universality and contemporary significance are the appreciable features of his narrative talent. The experiments, made during the writing from *Yayati* to *Boiled Beans on Toast*, proclaim Karnad's artistic dexterity. Karnad in his mythological plays, concentrates on both the plot and the characters. But in later plays *Wedding Album* and *Boiled Beans on Toast*, he centralizes theme and individual's psyche and dilemma of human life more than the structure. The plot of the plays has several sub plots and complexities. But all the events are interconnected.

Karnad breaks the conventional traits of women characters. Contrary to Aristotle and Bharat Muni's definition for women characters in the play, he presents them as courageous, rebel and intelligent. Karnad logically develops and puts forward every character's reaction to the situation. It maintains consistency and likeliness in the art of characterization. By following the tradition of *Natyashastra*, he employed all kinds of characters – Uttama (good in action), Adhama (inferior in action) and Madhayama (average) eg. Good characters like Anjana, Mrs. Nadkarni, average like Muttu, Hema, and inferior like Vimala. By raising different emotions in the plays, Karnad arouses various rasa.

The story of Radhabai and her daughter and the agony of Muttu's mother arouse Karuna rasa, and Mrs. Nadkarni's feeling of fear about her daughter Vidula arouses Bhayanka rasa. The technique of soliloquy is visible in *Wedding Album* for unveiling the reality of Radhabai's inner turmoil and Mr. Nadkarni's emotions. Karnad employs this technique for sowing the seed of the story and progressing the plot. Tutun Mukherjee summarizes Karnad's narratology with her befitting comment:

Girish Karnad's drama reflects both continuity and innovation. The world of his theatre has flexible limits. Not satisfied with what he has already achieved, Karnad moves on with his creative explorations into new aspects of theatre that will offer further understanding of the ways of living with the emphasis that every advance made, no matter how praiseworthy, is just the site of a potential new beginning. (55)

Karnad, as advancing himself pursuant to time, runs parallel with the spectator's speculations. These latest plays make his art refreshing. By adopting and rejecting Indian and western dramatic techniques he establishes his own artistry of dramatic art. The effective implementation of prop art in characterization, dramatic structure, use of myth, social and religious issues and modern theme enhance his dramatic art and present him as a bestselling playwright. Thus, as is apparent from the above discussion, Girish Karnad employs various techniques that give a close knitted texture to his drama and lends variety that imprison the attention of the reader and the spectator.

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