

SPIRITUAL COMPARISON WITH THE DRAMAS

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INTRODUCTION

The topic here I, am going to discuss is about Spiritual comparison with the drama and cultural studies. I would also like to describe the term ‘Culture’ is a strange and capacious category. Cultural Studies has shared a substantive interest in issue of power, representation, popular culture, subjectivity, identities and consumption. I would like to compare spiritual connections to other Indian Myth. First I, would like to coin the definition of cultural studies “the term cultural studies hold the account because it stresses a certain type of culture. To be specific the version of cultural studies which places language at its heart. The kind of cultural studies influenced by poststructuralist theories of language, representation and subjectivity is given greater attention than cultural studies more concerned with the ethnography of lived experience or with cultural policy.”

“Cultural Studies does not speak with one voice, it cannot be spoken with one voice, and I do not have one voice which to represent it.”

The word spirituality comes from the Latin “spiritus” which literally means “breath”, signifying “Life”. In more definite fictional terms, spirituality can be thematically reflected in texts through a number of literary devices that evoke specific spiritual responses from the bibliophile (reader). Spirituality has a strong root in literature from the birth of it. Spirituality was also used to discipline people in those days it was also used to terrorize people to make a better living of their life. The form they used to convey spirituality was expressed through the oral form of prayers, songs, drama, stories, chorus, dance, folk, ballad, painting and many more ways.

SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is characterized by faith, a search for meaning and purpose in life, a sense of connection with others, and a transcendence of self, resulting in a sense of inner peace and well-being. A strong spiritual connection may improve one's sense of satisfaction with life or enable accommodation to disability. Spirituality is something felt and seen by each and every person. It cannot be forced to one it is all about the feel and thoughts that a person needs to get on their own. Talking about spirituality there are many religion in this world. Each and every religion has its own teaching and preaching to their people. All the religion talks about how positively we should lead our life. Even a single mistake and change our fate.

Just like how the most glorious cities like Dwaraka and Atlantis disappeared in the depths of sea. "... in a single day and night of misfortune, the island of Atlantis disappeared into the depths of the sea." – Plato, 360 B.C.

DRAMA

In literature drama has always played a major role it has been used to portray fiction and non-fiction plays. Drama was also the easiest method to convey something to the people in those days. Drama is defined as a composition in prose or verse presenting in dialogue or pantomime a story involving conflict or contrast of character, especially one intended to be acted on the stage; a play. The branch of literature having such compositions as its subject; dramatic art or representation. The origin of drama is said to be deep rooted to religious tendency. It is said that dramas originated from Greek and Rome, later it was thought to Britain through Europe from Romans. Now talking about Indian drama which roots back to 1200-1500 BC which takes back to Rigveda one of the four vedas in Indian history it was written in hymns in the form of dialogues. It is also said that Indian drama begins its classical stage in 3rd -4th century. **Bhasa**, is said to be the father of Indian drama he was born on 3rd century ad, in India, the earliest known Sanskrit dramatist, many of his complete plays have been found.

MYTHOLOGY

The myth is more about the stories which speaks about gods, fantasies, the creatures which we see in those old scriptures, the old statues in monuments which was built in olden days like temples. Mostly the myth talks about the lifestyle of warriors, heroes and gods who lived way before us and how they helped to build this society for us. There are four basic theories of myth. Those theories are: the rational myth theory, functional myth theory, structural myth theory, and the psychological myth theory. These are the topics which I would like to discuss about. I would like to mention the books which I have chosen to work with are Nagamandala, Hayavadana and Yayati. The writer of these books are Girish Karnad. These books were originally written in Kannada and later translated to English. It is said that Girish Karnad is known to be one of India's most intellectual writer, he is one writer who cannot be categorized or bought under a label for his writings because he has written in all genres. He was born in Bombay presidency and when he was 14 his family moved to Karnataka. He attended Karnataka University and he started to study about Yakshanga theatre. Karnad went to attend Oxford University, there he was a Rhodes Scholar he studied politics, economics, and philosophy. His first work Yayati was written during his time in Oxford His second play was Tughlaq it is one of his best-known works. One interesting fact about Karnad is he always writes his work in Kannada and then translates it to English and other languages. He has got lots of recognition for his and he also won the most prestigious award the Padma Bushan. He has also directed many movies and acted in many of the Indian films. Karnad passed away on June 2019, but still many of his works are been recognized and thought in many universities.

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE

The dramas which I, have chosen are all related to myth. The dramas which am going to describe are all can fall about spirituality, transformation both physically and mentally on the protagonist. The main objective of these dramas are realisation of the protagonist. To make it more interesting am going to do a comparison with few of Hindu Mythology which I, hope is going to take this paper to the next level.

BACKGROUND

Exploring the differences to discuss the spirituality of these dramas.

Nagamandala

This is a two act play and one frame-story. This drama was written in kannada at 1987 and published in the year 1988. This title “Nagamandala” means “a play with cobra”. This drama is a blend with history, myth, spirituality and incorporate with few more tradition based books and heritage places. To prove the efficiency of women and their will power, to prove that they are liable to their family and society and what the society has to teach us. The centre theme of this drama is the injustice caused to women by men.

The comparison I am going to use for this drama is about the serpent clans which are very popular in our country. According to our myth we have many snake clans few of them are Shesha, Taskhaka, Vasuki, Astika, Kaliya, Karkotaka, Manasa, Paravataksha, Surasa, Susna and Ulupi. These specific snakes have served their own purposes in our myth. All these creatures are said to be elegant and majestic. They are all demi-gods, who can take human forms any time they wish.

The three main gods of Hinduism is the creator Bhrama who has a son with four wife it turns out that his third wife gave birth to the snake clan which later got divided into many clans as I, have mentioned earlier. The second god of Hinduism Lord Vishnu who is the protector has the snake Adhishes has his bed in the deep ocean. The third god Lord Shiva the destroyer has the snake Vasuki on his neck. He wears Vasuki as an ornament because of two things one Vasuki was used at Samudra Mandana to excreta the Elixir at that time Vasuki omits poison the halahalal lord Siva drinks the poison and saves Gods and Demons from that moment. Goddess Parvathi stops that poison from entering lord Siva’s throat Vasuki coils around his throat and stops the poison from entering. The second is it is said that Lord Siva wears Vasuki in neck to tell his devotees to keep ego in check, to keep the peace under prevail.

Now coming to our drama the Nagamandala, where a Cobra falls in love with our protagonist Rani, by taking her husband’s human form when he is not at home. Naga woo’s her with love and care which was never given by her husband Appana who spends his time in his concubine’s house and never cares about his wife Rani. At that time Kurudavva who is Rani’s neighbour comes into Rani’s rescues by giving her two love roots to mix it up with curry and give feed it to her husband. So after eating he

would madly fall in love with her, but Rani Gets frighten and throws it away for the first time and second time she pours it into cobra hills. Thats when Naga taste's the curry and sees Rani and falls in love at that sight. Since he is divine cobra he can shape shift into any human forms he wishes to take he observes Rani's house day and night. Once Appana leaves the house by locking Rani Insides the house. Naga enters through the drain pipe in the form of Appana and showers love and care to Rani at day and leaves at night when Appana comes home he does not shows love. Rani gets confused by Appana's behaviour and Appana grown suspicious from Rani's behaviour and calls out for a social enquiry on Rani.

The village elders gather together to enquiry about Rani Prosperity, Rani tells them that she has never touched anyone other than her husband. To prove her purity she tells everyone that she will leave her hands into the cobra hill and if the cobra hurts her she is not pure and instead if the cobra blesses her she is pure. She was blessed by cobra and everyone in the village are shocked and stunned to see such a bliss, everyone thinks Rani is an avathar of goddess. The village elders tell Appana to accept her as she is and he couldn't resist because of peoples spirituality and believes.

Now he accept her for as she is and gets a son. This drama has three endings which makes it more interesting. I think maybe the elders did not believe Rani to be a goddess her life with Appana would have come to an end and she might have had a good life with the Naga, but she would be fooled by the Naga. Whatever it is the pain and sufferings are only for the women, even the mistakes are done by men the sufferings and punishment is given to women. Even in great epics lots of battle has been fought by men but the reason they told was women. With spirituality as the key every human can be forged into who they are not in both positive and negative ways.

Hayavadana

Drama Hayavadana means "horse face". It was written by Girish Karnad in the year 1971 and it is the twin play of Nagamandala. It was written in Kannada and translated into English. This is a two-act play. The main specialization of this drama is hybridity it's the mixture of breeds, according to this play. So I, have planned to talk about spirituality in the hybridity by taking it as a reference from Indian mythology. Which we have heard and celebrated for many centuries like lord Ganesh the son of lord Siva the destroyer, lord Hanuman son of Lord Vayu and Dasavathara(the ten form) by lord Vishnu the protector. I have chosen these myth because the plays main character and the title talks about Hayavadana a celestial being who is half horse and half human. This drama starts by showing lord Ganesh at one end of the stage, lord Ganesh is the first god of Hindus before starting anything auspicious people pray to him. About lord Ganesh he was not born he was made by goddess Parvathi when she felt lonely by moulding the clay and gave life to it but lord Siva did not know about this. One day when he came to visit Parvathi he saw a kid guarding her room and Lord Ganesh had his order from his mother that she was not to be disturbed so Ganesh did not permit lord Siva without knowing who he is. A war was fought and Siva took the head of Ganesh. When Parvathi

came to know about this she was fuming in rage of anger later lord Bramma was called to find a solution, Siva's devotes were sent in every direction with the instruction that the first creature who lays down with his head facing north that creatures head must be bought to him. The devotes found a elephant who was laying by facing north so they chopped of his head and took it to lord Siva that's how lord Ganesh got his elephant head.

The next myth is about lord Hanuman the son of Lord Vayu (god of Air) we might wonder how he had the face of monkey, it is because of his mother Anjana a nymph once disturbed a sage during his meditation so he cursed her by telling her child will be born with the face of monkey. That's how lord Hanuman became a hybrid with the face of monkey.

Now talking about the hybridity many gods and goddess have taken the form of animals to gain power from that breed and to consider every living being as equal and each and every being has it is own contribution to this universe. To talk about the drama hayavadana it has limited characters. The one line plot of this drama is two friends fall in love with one woman and their heads get accidentally swapped. This drama starts with a narrator who tells Hayavadana to go to Kali temple to become complete instead of being a hybrid. So he starts telling the tale of two friends Kapila and Devdatta, who are from different caste but they are friends. Devdatta falls in love with a girl named Padmini he asks his friend Kapila to help him propose to Padmini, so Kapila goes to deliver this message but he also falls in love with Padmini still he does not express his feelings instead he helps his friend. Devdatta and Padmini gets married. One day three of them leaving to the town Ujjaini, they travelled through the forest Padmini compliments Kapila in many ways were Devdatta gets envious and goes to the temple which is near by telling Kapila and Padmini that he has to fulfil a pledge that he made to goddess Kali. He goes in and cuts his head off and offers it to Kali, later Kapila goes in search of his friend seeing him headless he also sacrifices his head and dies. Then comes Padmini in search of them seeing them headless and dead she gets ready to offer herself to the goddess, but suddenly she hears a voice and stunts to see the goddess herself has appeared.

The goddess tells Padmini that she is will bring her husband and friend back to life all Padmini has to do is to place the heads to the body. In happiness Padmini swaps the heads and goddess brings both of them to life then they realise what Padmini has done. Later they both fight for Padmini telling that to whom she must belong. Devdatta takes her home but when day's role on their physics starts to change like how they were. Padmini slowly misses Kapila so one day she takes her son to the forest to show Kapila and she stays there with him for many days. Devdatta finds this and murders Kapila and he also dies, seeing this Padmini feels terrible and throws herself in the pyre and dies before jumping in the pyre Padmini gives her son to the bhagavata and tells him to hand over her son to a hunter and raise him until 5. Once he turns 5 take him to Devdatta's father the child's grandfather so that he could bring him up well. Hearing all this Hayavadana goes to the Kali temple in Ujjaini. He becomes a full horse with magnificent

look, he becomes a celestial being. Bhagavata feels happy for helping both Hayavadana and Padmini's son. Bhagavata thinks that his task of his birth is completed by helping both. He prays to lord Ganesh for showing his path of destiny.

...I've tried them all. Magicians, mendicants, maharishis, fakirs, saints and sadhus...

-Hayavadana, p.81

After hearing this from Hayavadana we could know that he has tried all the remedy to become a complete human which becomes a failure for him, but after listening to Bhagavatha he goes to Ujjaini Kali temple and prays faithfully with all his heart to the goddess and keeps his faith on the goddess, by telling he wants to complete without mentioning a human or a horse. So he is changed into horse and lives happily. This might have not happened if he believed in Bhagavatha and went to the temple he might have been a hybrid all his life trying to fit either with human or with animal. Same way Padmini if she had not believed in the goddess she might have not bought Kapila and Devdatta to their life. They would have been dead and Padmini would have also been dead and this drama would have never been known, Hayavadana would have been a hybrid. So with faith and spirituality this play has been fulfilled.

Yayati

Girish Karnad's first play is Yayati. It was written before he went to England at the age of 22. Yayati was written during 1960 it was published has won the Mysore state award at 1962. Kirthinath Kthokoti writes a letter to Karnad telling him that his work has become a huge success because of that letter Karnad decided to return to India. This drama is based about the one of the India's greatest epic Mahabharatha. Yayati is a four act play. This play reveals the true human inner thoughts about ageing process. It dissects the psyche recess of human psychology.

In this drama we can see the son sacrificing his age for his father. In Mahabharatha sacrifice is not a new it's something we could see common throughout the epic. Poru sacrifices his age and youth for his father Yayati. Bheeshma sacrifices his marriage life and stays celibate all his life. Karnan knowing his mother is Kunthi and doesn't reveal the truth about his birth. These are the common sacrifices which we know. Let me start with Bheeshma one of the greatest warrior to be known in Mahabharatha. Bheeshma was the Grandfather of both Pandavas and Kauravas. He was the son of king Shanthanu and goddess Ganga. Shanthanu loses Ganga over a curse and later he falls in love with a woman named Sathyavadi from fisherman community. She agrees to marry the king on one condition that her children must inherit the throne, by this Bheeshma is denied the rite of throne. So Bheeshma takes the vow to be celibate throughout his life and he would guard the throne for rest of his life.

About Karnan he was the son of lord of Sun and Kunthi the mother of Pandavas. Kunthi had a received a blessings from a sage that she could get a child by praying and summoning any god she wishes. To try and check if this is true Kunthi test this by

summoning the god of Sun and asked for a son she was granted but the only problem is she was not married and in those days it was not accepted. So she kept her son in a basket with lotus and some valuables and keeps the basket in the river it flows away. Even after years rolled away Kunthi could not forget her first born son. Karnan was bought up by a chariot driver and his wife who found Karnan in the basket which was washed ashore. They took it and bought up as their own son without telling him how they got him. For a very long period he was not told about his birth secret later when the great war of Kurukshetra war was about to happen lord Krishna told him about his birth secret and who are his brothers but still Karnan sacrificed his original identity and stood by the Kauravas. He fought against his own flesh and blood his brothers. Karnan killed his own nephew to stop his torment. Until his last breath he did not acknowledge he is the first of Pandavas and Kunthi's first born, only his life was about to leave his body Kunthi revealed the truth about who Karnan was and his brothers ran to him to apologize for what they have done to him and asked for his forgiveness which Karnan happily forgave them.

Now coming to the drama Yayati the ancestors of Pandavas and Kauravas. Yayati was the son of Nahusha and Ashokasundari. They had five sons Yayati, Samyayti, Ayati, Viyati and Kriti. Out of the four Yayati is said to conquer the whole world and bought it under one flag. He was called as the chacaravarthi. He was married to Devayani the daughter of Sukracharya one of the greatest Indian sage and Devyani got Shamsritha has her maid she was the daughter of king Vrishparvan. It means Shamsritha was the princess. Later Yayati falls in love with Shamsritha, Devayani runs to her father after knowing this Sukracharya curses Yayati to old age at that moment because Yayati is said to be so conscious and proud about his youth. Thats what was taken from him. Yayati ran to the sage for forgiveness and asked him to reverse the curse, but the sage told him there is only one way if someone gets the old age willingly from him then it is possible for Yayati to return to his old form after hearing this the word was sent around the kingdom. No one accepted it except the prince Pooru who was just married to princess Chitralkha. At first Yayati was happy about Pooru's decision he praises for his sacrifice, Poor goes to his wife for the nuptial night she sees him and shouts out of frighten. She runs to the king and questions him about what he has done to his own blood. The king feels guilty and calls Pooru and tells him he will get back the curse, while this goes on Chitralkha commits suicide. That makes Yayati heart broken and he embraces the old age.

So sacrifice is something parents do for their child but in this case the son's sacrifice is something not usual and we cannot see often. It is a rare case were son gave his entire youth for the sake of his father who was not ready to embrace the old age.

SUMMATION

This paper is all about the culture, spirituality, sacrifice, myth and drama through all these genres teach us about the facts and myths of this society from our ancestors. It tells us how and how not to lead a life. To show us the right path they chose spirituality,

because if it is spiritual we don't ask any question and we follow it accordingly. Same thing if someone tells us we don't follow it or we might question them by asking why? How? By Whom? For What? All these questions might come from us and we might not into the right path. The plays, epics and the character teach us these things and how all they had lived a life and become great humans. The dramas I have chosen and the reference I have chosen are all from the Indian mythology and the three main drama of my paper was all written by the same author Girish Karnad. The reference which was mentioned above are various texts and stories I have used to compare and contrast for these drama. I have also mentioned the reference link below this text.

Work Citation

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