

CHAPTER-III

KARNAD'S FOLKTALES – *HAYAVADANA* AND *NAGAMANDALA*

I. INTRODUCTION :

Hayavadana is Karnad's next play the plot of which is derived primarily from Thomas Mann's *The Interposed Heads* while it too is an adaptation from *Vetala Panchavimsati* by Jambhadatta (Twenty five stories about King Vikrama and Vetala, the goblin) in Sanskrit. Karnad has altered the narrative of two texts very carefully and successfully in order to reflect the contemporary relevance to notions of prioritizing head over body or the vice-versa. While the *Vetala Panchavimsati* regards that the head of a person is more important than the body, Mann's *The Transposed Heads* suggests that the head which is a symbol of Intellect and the body which is symbol of Beauty may not seek only those which belong to their category but are bound to seek their opposites. *Hayavadana* is an adaptation of Mann's *The Interposed Heads*. Hence an attempt is made to regard Hayavadana as a Palimpsest art in this chapter. However, it must be noticed that Karnad has altered the source texts significantly in his play. The aim of the study in this chapter is to examine the theme and technique in *Hayavadana*.

After *Hayavadana*, Karnad has taken seventeen years to create his next play, *Naga-Mandala* and it was published in 1988. The author wrote this play in 1987-8 during his residency as a Fulbright fellow at the University of Chicago. It is significant to note that it was the first contemporary Indian play produced by a major regional American theatre company, the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis. Karnad has adapted “two oral tales he heard several years earlier from his mentor, A.K.Ramanujun.” (Aparna, xxx). It is proposed to study *Naga-Mandala* with reference to the adaptation of the oral tales in this chapter. *Naga-Mandala* is examined with the focus on why and how the folk tales have been adapted in the play.

II. Plot of *Hayavadana*:

While Mann has manipulated the original myth to impart the sense of reason to his generation, Karnad takes an advanced step to ridicule the received myth by employing Mann’s version and subverting the original and providing a subversion of Mann’s version subsequently. The illustration to this effect is preceded by the resume of the *Hayavadana*. There are two plots in *Hayavadana*. The first is woven around the life of the trio Devadatta – Padmini – Kapila. Devadatta and Kapila are very intimate friends despite the fact that Devadatta is a Brahmin and Kapila an ironsmith by their castes respectively. The former falls head over heel

in love with Padmini whose details are not known to him. In his depression of love sickness, he takes an oath of sacrificing his arms to Kali and head to Lord Rudra if he gets her as his wife. Unable to bear the groan of his friend, Kapila undertakes the responsibility of tracing Padmini's whereabouts. On accomplishing it, Devadatta and Padmini get married.

Subsequently the three of them set out for a trip. On the way they halt for a while to rest. At this juncture, Devadatta feels that his wife is attracted towards Kapila. He leaves them behind and pays a visit to the temple of Kali. He remembers his oath and offers his head as a sacrifice by cutting his head off. On seeing no sign of Devadatta's return, Kapila goes in search of his friend. On reaching the temple of Kali, he is shocked to find that his friend lies guillotined. Fearing that he may be suspected as the culprit of his friend's death, he follows suit.

After waiting for the return of Devadatta and Kapila for some time in vain, Padmini goes in search of them. On arriving at the temple of Kali, she discovers that both of them have decapitated themselves. Awestruck about how to return home alone, she decides to kill herself in the same way. At this moment, Goddess Kali grants the boon to restore the dead to life and asks her to join their heads to their respective bodies. Padmini happens to mix them up so that Devadatta's head goes to

Kapila's Body and vice versa and subsequently they become alive but with the exchanged heads. By quoting the *shastras*, Padmini goes with the person who has got the head of Devadatta.

A child is born in the ensuing days of the couple. At the instigation of Padmini, Devadatta leaves for a fair to buy new dolls for his child. In his absence, she pays a visit to Kapila and stays with him for a few days. Devadatta arrives there in search of his wife and a quarrel ensues between Devadatta and Kapila over the claim of Padmini. Both of them kill each other in the duel. Padmini dies on the pyre of them leaving her child to Bhagavata instructing that for the first five years the child should grow in the community of the tribes in the forest as Kapila's son and then be handed over to Devadatta's father. Thus ends the first plot.

The second plot deals with *Hayavadana* who has the horse head and the human body. He moves heaven and earth to become a complete man. On the recommendation of Bhagavata, he visits the Kali temple only to return not as a complete man but as a complete horse except his voice which is retained as that of human. With the help of Padmini's son he gets his voice changed from human to horse's voice. Thus ends the episode of *Hayavadana*.

There are two source texts of Hayavadana namely (i) *The Myth of Transposed Heads in the Story Number Six of Vetala Panchavimsati* (ii) Thomas Mann's *The Transposed Heads*. A summary of these texts are provided here.

(i) The Myth of Transposed Heads in the Story Number Six of

Vetala Panchavimsati: According to *Vetala Panchvimsati*, this myth occurs in the sixth story. Vetala tells King Vikrama this sixth story which is summed up here. In the story, two friends, Vimala and Shuddapata, belonging to washer-man community, get their son, Dhaval, and daughter, Madhana Sundari respectively married. Subsequently, the brother of Madhana Sundari visits the couple to invite them to his house as a part of the tradition. While three of them are on their way to Shudapata's house, they happen to pass through the Durga temple. On being aroused by the scene of the sacrifice offered to the Goddess Durga by her devotees, Dhaval offers his own head by cutting his head off himself. On seeing this, his brother-in-law follows suit overwhelmed by his love for his brother-in-law who is an intimate friend to him as well.

Madhana Sundari arrives at this spot in search of her husband and brother and is stunned to see them dead. On realizing their noble character, she prays to the goddess that she should get them as husband and brother respectively in all her births to come and gets ready to hang herself to death. At this juncture, the voice of the goddess is heard asking Madhana Sundari to join the heads to the respective bodies so that she can resurrect them. Due to darkness and anxiety, she fixes the head of her husband to the body of her brother and vice versa. No sooner are the

heads fixed to the bodies than they become alive. Madhana Sundari becomes non- pulsed at the sight of her husband and brother with their head interchanged with each other and wonders who her husband is.

Vetala winds up the story here and puts the same question to King Vikrama. He replies that the person with the head of her husband has to be regarded as her husband. On hearing the right answer Vetala returns to the drum stick tree. This is the end of the story. Indeed Vetala Panchavimsati with a series of twenty five stories represents the monarch's education in self-knowledge imparted through the answers to riddles and puzzles woven mainly around unusual human relations.

(ii)The Myth Transposed Heads in Thomas Mann *novella*: Thomas Mann, taking the help from Zimmer, has produced *The Transposed Heads* based on the above story with some striking alterations. In his *novella* the husband and wife are changed into Shridaman, a Brahmin and Seeta respectively. The brother-in-law is transformed as a friend by name Nanda. The tale remains similar to the original until the two men being restored to life. Unlike in the original, Mann, in his version, has twisted the character of wife by showing that she is extremely happy at the transposed heads because she has nursed the passion for a husband with an intellectual's brain and a strong working-class body. But she becomes disappointed at the end because the intellectual head transforms the virile body of the working class man into the body of the man of intellectual mind gradually.

Mann suggests that the mutual killing of these two men is the only solution for the crisis. The story ends with a sequel in which the career of the son born of the marriage is narrated. What Mann tries to confirm is that “The world is not made that spirit is fated to love only spirit, and beauty only beauty. Indeed the very contrast between the two points out, with clarity at once intellectual and beautiful, that the word’s goal is a union between spirit and beauty, a kind of bliss that is no longer divided but is whole and consummate. The tale of ours is but an illustration of the failures and false starts that attend the efforts to reach the goal.” (Mann, 168). It can be called myth tropic version of *The Transposed Heads* number six of *Vetala Panchavimsati*.

There are two plots in *Naga – Mandala*. The first plot is about the flames that gather in a village temple to exchange gossip about the households they inhabit. This is a minor plot but used as a device to introduce the major plot, which is about the plight of woman called Rani. Rani and Appanna is a newly married couple. The latter has been in liaison with the concubine because of which he never stays at home at night. He returns home during the daytime and stays with the prostitute in the night. While he leaves home at night, he keeps his wife inside the house and locks the door from outside. Kurudavva, who is a blind woman in the neighbourhood and is an old friend of Appanna’s mother, meets

Rani through the window and gives two magic roots to attract her husband towards her. When she has tried the first small root, it makes no effect on her husband. Then she tries the second big one and she becomes scared to find that the food in which it is mixed becomes blood red. Therefore, she pours it in the hole by anthill. The king snake of the ant hill consumes it and falls in love with her. It visits her in the form of Appanna and she becomes pregnant subsequently. Appanna alleges that his wife is unfaithful to him and on the suggestion of the snake-Appanna, she faces the snake ordeal and gets through it proving her chastity. Her husband becomes slave of her there after. The snake lover visits her once after sometime and becomes vexed finding Rani and Appanna are in harmony. Without being able to tolerate it, the snake commits suicide in Rani's long tress. On the advice of Rani, her son cremates the dead. In the minor plot, he has used the tale of lamps to suggest the practice of gossip in the villages in the common place like temples. Karnad has used the tale as a device of drama in *Naga-Mandala*.

III Themes and Technique in Hayavadana and Nagamandala:

As stated already, *Hayavadana* is an adaptation of Vetala Panchvimsati and Thomas Mann's "The Transposed Heads". *Hayavadana* is not replica of the source texts. The author has altered some elements in his play. There is a change of perspective in the

alteration of the original texts and this chapter aims at examining the theme of *Hayavadana*. Several instances are found in the characterization of Padmini to consider that the theme of the play breaks the myth that woman is weaker and subservient to man. Padmini is depicted as a strong and dominant woman at the beginning of the play itself. Devadatta has fallen head over heel in love with Padmini and feels that he cannot live unless she becomes his wife. He is prepared to sacrifice his head and arms to the deities for the sake of winning her as his wife. It is illustrated in the play dramatically while discussing matter with his friend Kapila as:

Devadatta : Don't please. I know this girl is beyond my wildest dreams. But still-I can't help wanting her-I can't help it. I swear, Kapila, with you as my witness I swear, If I ever get her as my wife, I'll sacrifice my two arms to the goddess Kali, I'll sacrifice my head to Lord Rudra..... (*Hayavadana*, Act I, 85).

In the above illustration, there is a strong suggestion of feminism. It means that man cannot command woman to obey his decision to marry a woman simply as it was the case in the past during which patriarchal domination was the law of the land. The play suggests that woman is beyond that easy reach of man and he has to struggle to win her hand now.

On the bidding of Devadatta, Kapila sets out to trace the whereabouts of Padmini. After a lot of difficulties, he discovers her house. When he knocks on the door, Padmini herself answers the knock. But her person is depicted not as a submissive and shy woman as our conventional portrayals, but as a strong and dominant one. She puts Kapila to shame by her bold and sarcastic response to his enquiry. Kapila's status as a man is lowered by his becoming ready to touch the feet of Padmini the same of which is cited from play as:

PADMINI : You knocked, didn't you ?

KAPILA : Er-yes...

PADMINI : Then why are you gaping at me ? What do you want ?

KAPILA : I- I just wanted to know whose house this was.

PADMINI : Whose house do you want ?

KAPILA : This one.

PADMINI : I see. Then who do you want here ?

KAPILA : The master ...

PADMINI : Do you know his name ?

KAPILA : No.

PADMINI : Have you met him ?

KAPILA : No.

PADMINI : Have you seen him ?

KAPILA : No.

PADMINI : So. You haven't met him, seen him or known him. What do you want with him ?

.....

KAPILA : (looking around; aside) : No one here. Still I have to find out her name. Devadatta must be in agony and he will never forgive me if I go back now. (Aloud) Madam, please. I have some very important work. I'll touch your feet....

PADMINI : (eager) : You will ? Really ? Do you know, I've touched every one's feet in this house some time or the other, but no one's ever touched mine ? You will ? (*Hayavadana*, Act I, 87-89).

From this illustration, two important changes in the depiction of contemporary women are revealed. Firstly, there is change in position of woman. While women are expected to show their subservience by way of falling to the feet of elderly men for blessing in the past, the play satirizes this convention by the depiction of Kapila as being ready to touch the feet of Padmini, a woman. It is very important to note that it is uncommon in man-made social system. This indicates that the portrayal of Padmini purports to defy the age-old male supremacy in our society.

The second instance is observed in the episode of the proposed journey of Devadatta, Padmini and Kapila to Ujjain. In the meanwhile Devadatta and Padmini are married. After the marriage, Devadatta grows annoyed by the frequent visits to them, while he wishes to be alone with his wife. He becomes restless when his wife pays Kapila more attention which is portrayed in the play as follows :

DEVADATTA : I'm not upset, Padmini. Kapila isn't merely a friend- he's like my brother. One has to collect merit in seven lives to get a friend like him. But is it wrong for me to want to read to you alone? Or to spend a couple of days with you without anyone else around? (*Pause.*) Of course, once he came, there wasn't the slightest chance of my reading any poetry. You had to hop around him twittering Kapila ! Kapila !' every minute ((*Hayavadana*, Act I).

Now that the journey of three to *Ujjain* has been arranged, Devadatta apprehends that Padmini and Kapila will become intimate to each other. Therefore, he tries heaven and earth to cancel the trip. He entreats his wife by saying that it is not safe for her pregnancy to travel for a long distance by a bullock cart. Her reply to him is a manifestation of feminism which is as follows :

DEVADATTA : Padmini, I've told you ten times already I don't like the idea of this trip. You should rest-not face such hazards. The cart will probably shake like an earthquake. It's dangerous in your condition. But you won't listen.

PADMINI : My condition !What's happened to me ? To listen to you one would think I was the first woman in this world to become pregnant. I only have stumble and you act as though it's all finished and gone ... (*Hayavadana*, Act I, 91).

This illustration indicates that Padmini does not need the sympathy of her husband. She need not confine herself to her house just because she is pregnant. She exhibits a stronger will power than the women in the conventional depictions do. In a way, the instance suggests that there is a note of emancipation of womankind from the control of man. Padmini understands that her husband tries to cancel the trip due to his jealousy of him and yet conceals it by pretending that he suggests the cancellation of proposed journey in the interest of his wife's health only. So she plays a trick to pay him back in the same coin. Therefore she asks her husband to send Kapila back by informing him that the journey has been cancelled due to Padmini's ill health. Accordingly he tells him a lie that his wife is not well, the illustration of this from the play is worth while to cite:

DEVADATTA : Kapila, we have to call off today's trip.

KAPILA (Suddenly silenced) : Oh !

DEVADATTA : (embarrassed) :You see, Padmini isn't well...

(*Hayavadana*, Act I, 94).

As a result, Kapila makes a start to leave the place resolving that he should visit them once again. At this moment, Padmini comes out and proposes that they should not delay the trip by sitting there. Kapila is surprised at this and enquires whether she is ill. Her reply is given as a big blow because she says that she is not ill. Her reply from the play is quoted for instance:

PADMINI : Why are you sitting here ? When are we going to start ? We are already late... (they look at her, surprised.)

KAPILA : But if you aren't well, we won't....

PADMINI : What's wrong with me ? I'm in perfect health. I had a headache this morning. But a layer of ginger paste took care of that. Why should we cancel our trip for a little thing like that? (Devadatta opens his mouth to say something but stays quiet.)

(To Kapila.) Why are you standing there like a statue?

KAPILA : No., really, if you have a headache...

PADMINI : I don't have a headache now !

DEVADATTA : But, Padmini...

PADMINI : Kapila, put those bundles out there in the cart.

The servant will bring the rest (*Kapila stands totally baffled.*

He looks at Devadatta for guidance. There is none")

(*Hayavadana*, Act I, 94-95).

The character of Padmini is portrayed not only as an outspoken woman but also as a woman who can defeat the tricks of her husband by paying him back in his own coin. Subsequently the journey is undertaken by a bullock cart. On the way they halt at one place. In this place, Padmini notices a tree with full of flowers. The flower is called the Fortunate Lady's flower. Kapila goes to pluck some flowers for Padmini. When he climbs the tree Padmini is portrayed to admire his masculine body. It is narrated as:

PADMINI (watching him, aside): How he climbs- like an ape. Before I could even say 'Yes', he had taken off his shirt, pulled his dhoti up and swung up the branch. And what an ethereal shape! Such a broad back; like an ocean with muscles rippling across it-and then that small, feminine waist which looks so helpless...

PADMINI (aside): He is like a Celestial Being reborn as a hunter. How his body sways, his limbs curve- It's a dance almost.

DEVADATTA (aside): And why should I blame her? It's his strong body- his manly muscles. And to think I had never ever noticed them all these seven years! I was an innocent – an absolute baby.

PADMINI (aside) : No woman could resist him.
(*Hayavadana*, Act I, 96).

This illustration seems to de-mystify the woman's chastity. According to this notion woman should not admire any man other than her husband. To do so is treated as sin and there were severe punishments to those women who violated this code of conduct. Since the play shares the feminist ideology, it defies such notions by portraying Padmini as admiring the body of Kapila who is not her husband. In the ensuing episodes, Devadatta dies by beheading himself in front of the goddess Kali statue. Kapila follows suit for he feels that he cannot live without him. Padmini arrives a little later and is surprised to discover that both her husband and Kapila are lying dead. She feels betrayed by both of them by their act. Her anguish is reflected in her expression in the play as follows:

PADMINI :...

Oh ! God ! What's this Both! Both gone! And didn't even think of me before they went? What shall I do? What shall I do? Oh, Devadatta, what did I do that you left me alone in this state? Was that how much you loved me? And you, Kapila, who looked at me with dog's eyes, you too? How selfish you are, you men and how thoughtless! What shall I do now? Where shall I go? How can I go home?
(*Hayavadana*, Act I, 101).

One can notice an important factor which is characterized by feminism in this scene. It is the revelation of man's love for woman is mechanical and unreliable. Woman is used as use and throw object. Devadatta has loved and married Padmini but has forgotten his responsibility to safe guard by committing suicide. Kapila has nursed passion for Padmini but he has also betrayed her by committing suicide. In other words, the play exposes the wicked social system in which a woman is but a destitute.

When Padmini tries to kill herself, Goddess Kali grants her a boon to resurrect Devadatta and Kapila. She asks Padmini to fix the heads to the respective bodies so that they will become alive. But Padmini joins the head of Devadatta to Kapila's body and vice versa. No sooner has she done so than they become alive with changed heads. Finally she takes the man with Devadatta's head as her husband on the basis of the logic that head is the main.

Several years have passed. In the meanwhile a child is born to the couple. Then her husband leaves for fair in the far off place for buying dolls for Padmini. During this time, she goes in search of the man with Kapila's head. On his return, Padmini's husband finds that his wife is missing. On the presumption, he also goes to the place of the man with Kapila's head. He discovers that his wife is there only. Both Devadatta and Kapila enter into a duel and kill each other. During this incident also Padmini is deserted by both of them. Padmini narrates this:

PADMINI : They burned, lived, fought, embraced and died.

I stood silent. If I'd said, 'Yes, I'll live with you both,' perhaps they would have been alive yet. But I couldn't say it I couldn't 'Yes'. No Kapila no Devadatta. I know it in my blood you couldn't have lived together. You would've had to share not only me but your bodies as well. Because you knew death, you died in each other's arms. You could only have lived ripping each other to pieces. I had to drive you to death. You forgave each other, but again, left me out.

(*Hayavadana*, Act II, 130-131).

As stated earlier, the play attempts to expose the social system, which denies woman an independent place in the social life. She has to live under the shadow of man for- ever. While insisting woman on her

perpetual service and duties to her husband, the same is applied to man. In exposing this patriarchal tyranny, the play shows its inclination towards the ideology of feminism.

Techniques in Hayavadana

The play commences with the Bhagwata invoking Ganesha at the beginning : “An elephant’s head on a human body, a broken tusk and a cracked belly whichever way you look at him he seems the embodiment of imperfection of incompleteness.” (*Hayavadana*, Act I, 73). This technique is employed to depict imperfection or incompleteness which is the very essence of the play. Usually Ganapati is invoked at the beginning of the play but here it has varied meanings. The story proceeds further with the aid of the Bhagwata. Sadashiva Wodeyar highlighting the importance of Bhagawata states:

“He is also resourceful and can compose short passages on the spur of the moment and very often in the course of the drama, he introduces a few lines of his own to suit the occasion.” (Sadashiva, 25).

The search for identity is dramatized in the play through the characters of Kapila, Devadatta and Padmini in prominent roles. Padmini craves for both men. Moutushi Chakravartee depicts:

“With its highly stylized action and mimicry (specially, the scene at the temple of Kali and the sword fight between Devadatta and Kapila in the second Act, P.61) Karnad invests the play with a significance which brings out the puniness of the ‘incomplete’ human being.” (Moutushi, 36).

The Bhagwata’s description of the two friends has an echo of the mythical characters but come in a mocking manner through the techniques of Karnad. Such incidents are presented through communication of the ideals and equally through their erasure. Rita Kothari observes:

“What I wish to establish is that through the complexity of form, Karnad generates an in-built critique of the ideal and the normative. At another level Karnad’s subversiveness is also a reassertion of “resilience in and through the local and the specific” (Griffiths 24). The subculture of Yakshagana, an indigenous folk form critiques the mainstream culture communicated through the classical frame work. The conflict is not of forms but what forms represent.” (Rita, 61).

Dolls are used as a technique to convey the changes in the physical features of Devadatta. The impossible situation is brought through the events faced by Padmini. Hayavadana is portrayed as a minor character

and the title is after him. The feelings of Padmini are furthered through the female chorus. There is non-linearity in the scenes and Act one concludes on a controversial note whereas Act Two through the Bhagwata poses a question to the audience. "What indeed is the solution to the problem, which holds the entire future of these three unfortunate beings in a balance?" This technique is used to ridicule the logic that head is superior to the body. The sub-plot of Hayavadana provides a parallel or a frame to the story of the two friends. The narration of Hayavadana's tragic story of how his mother was transformed into a horse by the curse of her husband and her running away abandoning her child asserts the poignancy of incompleteness. Goddess Kali, a supernatural being is portrayed as a terrifying figure and in her presence the two friends behead themselves and Padmini fixes the wrong heads. This is a technique conveying Padmini's urge. The stage craft is superbly managed. Half-curtains and painted curtains are carried by stage hands to convey factual events. The curtain painted with blazing fire is lifted to emphasize the flames rising and the evil practice arousing anger. The ending of the play is significant. Padmini's son throws away the dolls and laughs like a human being whereas Hayavadana loses his human voice when Padmini's son sings a nursery rhyme. Regarding the perfection attained by Hayavadana finally many critics oppose the view. M. Sarat Babu opines:

“Raykar in her brilliant paper on Hayavadana argues that the unification of Apollo and Dionysus symbolized by Devadatta and Kapila is not possible.” (Sarat, 230).

Hence Karnad’s technical subversions have received great tribute both nationally and internationally.

A Note on the Source Text of *Naga-Mandala* : The author has acknowledged that A.K.Ramanujan’s two oral stories are the source for him to write *Naga-Mandala*. Indeed, these two oral stories are available in print in a book entitled *A Flowering Tree and other oral tales from India* edited by Stuart Blackburn and Alan Dundes. The source story of the minor plot appears as the first story in the book entitled “A Story and a Song”.

It is a story about a couple in a village. The wife knows a story and song but never articulates them to any one at all. Thus they feel suffocated as they are kept to her. However they escape from her one day while she is sleeping with her mouth open wide. They decide to take revenge on her by transforming themselves into a pair of shoes and man’s coat respectively and are found outside the house. When the husband returns home, he finds them and suspects that his wife receives a visitor secretly. When he enquires his wife, she replies that she knows no visitor and thus their conversation leads them into a quarrel. Being disappointed, the husband leaves for the local temple to sleep that night. Interestingly,

this temple is the venue for the lamps to assemble and gossip about their families. The lamp of the house of the couple arrives there late and narrates the quarrel between the husband and the wife. On hearing this, the husband gets his suspicion cleared and thus returns home. Karnad has incorporated this story with slight modification in his play *Naga – Mandala*. He has shown that the story and song are transformed into a woman and a sari respectively. The lamp tells the story not of the couple but of Rani.

The main plot of the play is an adaptation of the fifty sixth story entitled “The Serpent Lover” in the said collection. In the original text, it is the story of Kamakshi. Her husband does not indulge in the conjugal love with her as he has been under the love spell of a concubine. An old woman, from the neighbourhood, tries to help her by giving a root suggesting her that she should serve its paste through the meal. Accordingly, she mixes its paste in the sweet porridge but is taken aback to it turning into blood red. Therefore she spills the love potion in the ant hill behind her house.

The king of snakes, which lives in the anthill, consumes the love potion and consequently falls head over heel in love with her. Then he visits her every night in the form of her husband and makes love to her. As a result, she becomes pregnant. On discovering this factor, the snake reveals its original identity and persuades her to follow his advice to safeguard her from the crisis.

The snake lover suggests her that she should approach the king in his court in the next day and argue that her husband is the father of the child. She should propose to undergo the test of truth by holding the snake in the Siva temple if she is not trusted. Accordingly she meets the king and pleads for her case. But her husband refuses to trust her. Hence she faces the test of truth by taking the snake from the anthill. As per the plan, the snake does no harm to her. On the contrary, it hangs around her neck like a garland. As a result, she is declared chaste.

Kamakshi and her husband are united now and live together happily. She gives birth to a divine child after nine months. Then the snake lover advises her to send her son to her husband's harlot on a condition. Accordingly, the child shall go there with jewels weighed at home and it shall return without any loss of that jewels. With the help of the snake lover, some of the jewels are stolen and the concubine is held responsible for it. As a punishment, she is ordered to serve Kamakshi as a maid in her house.

The snake enters the bed room of Kamakshi in one night to observe how happy she is. On finding her to be sleeping next to her child and husband happily, it is unable to bear the change. Therefore it commits suicide by hanging with the help of her long hair. On waking up next morning, they see the corpse of the snake. She explains that it is the snake god to which she has prayed that she should get her lost husband back. Then he agrees to give it the last rites through his son. The story ends like this.

ADOPTION AND ADAPATATION OF MYTH IN *NAGA-MANDALA* – A STUDY:

Karnad has reworked on the two tales of A.K. Ramanujan for creating his outstanding play *Naga-Mandala* through the method of adaptation and application. Ramanujan's first tale is about a house wife whom her husband misunderstands and the subsequent quarrel between the couple. The tale is told in the third person narration. The woman has compressed a story and a song for long time. Hence the story and the song feel choked and frustrated. As a result, they wait for an opportunity to seek revenge on her. One day they are able to get out of her mouth through which is kept open during her nap. They change their form so as to create suspicion in her husband about her conduct. It is narrated in Ramanujan's tale as follows:

One day, when she was sleeping with her mouth open, the story escaped, fell out of her, took the shape of a pair of shoes and sat outside the house. The song also escaped, took the shape of something like a man's coat, and hung on a peg. The woman's husband came home, looked at the coat and shoes, and asked her, "Who is visiting?" "No one," said she. "But whose coat and shoes are these?" "I don't know," she replied. He wasn't satisfied with her answer. He was suspicious. Their conversation was unpleasant. The

unpleasantness led to a quarrel. The husband flew into a rage, picked up his blanket, went to the Monkey God's temple to sleep. The woman didn't understand what was happening. She lay down alone that night. She asked the same question over and over: "Whose coat and shoes are these?" Baffled and unhappy, she put out the lamp and went to sleep. (Ramanujan, 1).

However the riddle which was responsible for the quarrel of the couple in the house is resolved in the ensuing part of the tale. The husband who is lying down in the Maruti temple for sleep overhears the narration of the lamp of his house about what has happened and how the story and the song have created feud between the couple and realizes that his wife is not at fault.

Karnad has adapted and applied this tale in making his play *Naga-Mandala*. Karnad has included this tale in the prologue to the play which suggests that he is an experimentalist and innovator of the art of drama. He introduces the device of multiple narrators within the third person narration. He transforms the story into character cum narrator to dramatize the other tale of Ramanujan i.e., The Serpent Lover.

Besides, Karnad has altered the text of the first tale. While the husband suspects the wife, Karnad makes it vice versa in a very interesting manner. It is New Flame, the one from the house of the couple, is employed as the narrator who tells:

NEW FLAME: Let me explain: My mistress, the old woman, knows a story and a song. But all these years she has kept them to herself, never told the story, nor sung the song. So the story and the song were being choked, imprisoned inside her. This afternoon the old woman took her usual nap after lunch and started snoring. The moment her mouth opened, the story and the song jumped out and hid in the attic. At night, when the old man had gone to sleep, the story took the form of a young woman and the song became a sari. The young woman wrapped herself in the sari and stepped out, just as the old lady was coming in. Thus, the story and the song created a feud in the family and were revenged on the old woman. (*Nagamandala*, Prologue, 248).

The 'adoption and adaptation' of the Ramanujan first tale points out two factors. Firstly, the prologue filled with many stories suggests how stories are born. There are five speaking lamps including the NEW LAMP and they exchange the reasons for their delay to reach their regular assembling place from which what type of oil used for the maintenance of the lamp in various houses is revealed. The private affairs of the members of the family is also disclosed. Then the author has created a Man character and there is a story about him too. Secondly, it forms criticism of Drama and a new poetics of the art of playwriting. It is

reflected in the monologue of the Man character which is an alter ego of the author. The following text of the monologue testifies this assumption:

I asked the mendicant what I had done to deserve this fate.

And he said: 'You have written plays. You have staged them. You have caused so many good people, who trusting you, to fall sleep twisted in miserable chairs, that all that abused mass of sleep has turned against you and become the Curse of Death.(*Pause*) I hadn't realized my plays had had much impact. (*Pause*) Tonight may be my last night. So I have fled from home and come to this temple, nameless and empty. For years I've been lording it over my family as a writer. I couldn't bring myself to die a writer's death in front of them. (*Pause*) I swear by this absent God, if I survive this night I shall have nothing more to do with themes, plots or stories. I abjure all story-telling, all play-acting. (*Nagamandala*, Prologue, 23-24).

It throws light on the deterioration of the art of drama. It reminds the responsibilities of the playwrights to sustain the art by attracting the audience with new themes and forms. It reflects the evolution of literary art from the stereo types. The alteration of the text of the first tale highlights that the depiction of wife suspecting husband may be more realistic that its vice versa. Besides, showing a young woman going out of

the husband's room may give more dramatic effect than showing the pair of shoes and coat on the stage. Lastly, Karnad is not interested in giving old wine in a new bottle.

Karnad has made several changes in the process of adapting and applying the second tale in making *Naga-Mandala*. The name of the heroine in Ramanujan's *The Serpent Lover* is Kamakshi and her husband is not given any name at all. Karnad has converted the name of heroine from Kamakshi to Rani in his *Naga-Mandala* and has named her husband as Appanna. It is interesting to note that the way these names are selected exemplifies the folk oral tradition of story telling and the text from the play is illustrated to this effect as follows:

STORY: A young girl. Her name ... it doesn't matter. But she was an only daughter, so her parents called her Rani. Queen. Queen of the whole world. ... Rani continued to live with her parents until she reached womanhood. Soon, her husband came and took her with him to his village. His name was –well, any common name will do—

MAN: Appanna?

STORY: Appanna. (*Nagamandala*, Act One, 253).

The author adheres to the native oral narrative tradition by making the narrator and interlocutor participate in the process of story telling. It is typically an oriental tradition. Karnad has made three alterations in the

episode of Kurudavva. In the original tale, the woman has name and she is not blind. She gives love medicine in the form of potion to Kamakshi to use it with her husband. It is narrated thus: One day, an old woman who lived next door talked to her. "What is this, my dear? How can you take it, when your husband never talks to you and lies in pigsty of a harlot's house? We must do something about it. I'll give you some love medicine. Mix it with his food and serve it to him. Then your man will be your slave. He'll live at your feet, do whatever your wish, just watch." (Ramanujan, 155).

In *Naga-Mandala*, this old woman is given a name i.e., Kurudavva and she is also blind. Secondly, she gives two roots one small and one big respectively to Rani asking her to feed the small one first with the food to her husband. If it does not bear fruit, she should use the second root which is big. Thirdly, this old woman has a son. The author has created this character for two reasons. This character is necessary to carry Kurudavva to Rani's house as she can not move independently. Secondly, if love making between a snake and a woman is unscientific, there is room for one to infer that Rani's lover is not the snake but Kappanna.

Karnad has changed the nature of the liaison between the heroine and the snake. In *The Serpent Lover*, after consuming the love potion, which Kamakshi spills on the ant hill, the serpent changes its form

of snake to her husband and enters her house from the front door only. It is depicted in the tale thus:

That night, it took the shape of her husband and knocked on the door. Her husband, as usual, was out. She was startled by the knock. Who could it be? Should she let the person in? When she peeped through the chink in the door, there was a man outside who looked exactly like her husband. When she talked to him, he talked exactly her husband. He had the same voice and manner. She took him in without asking too many questions and he made her very happy that night. He came night after night and in a few days she was pregnant. (Ramanujan, 155).

On the contrary, in *Naga-Mandala*, the snake takes the form of Appanna but enters Rani's house through the drainage at the back side. The following is the illustration from *Naga-Mandala*:

By this time Rani has poured the curry into ant- hill and is running back to the house. The moment she turns her back to the ant- hill, a King Cobra lifts its hood, hissing, out of the ant-hill. Looks around. It sees Rani and follows her at a distance. By the time she has reached the front door of her house, it is behind a nearby tree, watching. ... When it is totally dark, the cobra moves toward the house. The barking

becomes louder, more continuous. Rani wakes up, goes to the window, curses and shouts. Goes back to bed. The Cobra enters the house through the drain in the bath room.

STORY: As you know, a cobra can assume any form it likes. That night, it entered the house through the bathroom drain and took the shape of – (*The Cobra takes the shape of Appanna. ... Naga searches for Rani in the house. Finds her sleeping in the corner. He moves nearer her and then gently caresses her. (Nagamandala, Act One, 266-267).*)

Karnad has made this change in order to make it suitable to theatrical effect. Since it is mythical play, the effect of the performance is expected to be more effective if the snake glides through the drainage. Another reason is that if the snake enters the house in the form of her husband, the neighbours may detect his visits one or the other day. Besides, Appanna has locked the door from outside. Hence the door can not be opened for Naga to enter from the front door.

Then in Ramanujan's tale, the serpent lover reveals his identity to Kamakshi when she becomes pregnant. It is presented in the tale like this: "When the snake came to know of it, he wanted to tell her the truth. He said, "Kamakshi, who do you think I am? Your husband? No, I'm the king of snakes. I fell in love with you and came to you in his shape." Then he shed her husband's form and became a five-headed serpent." (Ramanujan, 155). Then he resumes the form of her husband and asks

her not to feel panic about the consequences of her pregnancy. He assures her of security in all respects, the return of her husband to her and of making the harlot her servant.

But in *Naga-Mandala*, Naga never reveals his original identity to Rani at all. When Naga does not show any enthusiasm and happiness on the account of her pregnancy, Rani becomes stunned and questions him about his indifference believing innocently that Naga and Appanna are one the same.

In the original tale, on discovering Rani's pregnancy, her husband becomes furious and complains to him about her infidelity as follows: "He went straight to his father-in-law and protested, " Father-in-law, I haven't slept in the same bed with your daughter for three years now. She has taken a lover, the whore. How else did she become pregnant? The father-in-law summoned his daughter and asked her, "Your husband is saying these slanderous things. What do you say?" She replied, "He has never been good to me. But I've done nothing wrong." (Ramanujan, 156). On the contrary, there is no depiction of Appanna's summoning his father-in-law and his interrogation with Rani at all. Appanna develops rage on realizing that Rani has betrayed him and assaults her physically. He threatens her to abort the conception.

In *Naga-Mandala*, Karnad has altered the text depicting the suggestion the snake lover makes to Kamakshi as how to overcome the

crisis regarding pregnancy. In Ramanujan's tale, Kamakshi discusses with her snake lover in the following night of her father's departure. He suggests Kamakshi thus:

That night she talked to the king of snakes, who said, "Ha, that's very good. Don't worry about it. Tomorrow the king's court will be in session. Go there bravely, and say, 'The child in womb is my husband's, no one else's.' If they don't believe you, say then, I'll prove it to you by taking the test of truth. In the Siva temple, there is a king cobra. I'll hold it in my hand and prove to you the truth of what I say. If I'm false, I'll die.'" (Ramanujan, 156).

In Karnad's *Naga-Mandala*, Rani is portrayed as being unaware that Appanna and Cobra are different and it is the later who has been visiting her in the night and is responsible for her pregnancy. That is why when Appanna has sought the intervention of the village court of elders in the issue of her pregnancy, she mistakes that her husband plays a dual role. She argues that it is he who has made her pregnant and has complained to the Village Elders that she has betrayed him. When she interacts with Naga, she is under the impression that it is her husband Appanna. However, Naga advises her to follow his suggestion without revealing the fact that he is not

Appanna. The dialogue between Naga and Rani in Naga-Mandala is illustrated to this effect as follows:

NAGA: Then listen to me carefully. When you face the Elders, tell them you will undertake the snake ordeal.

RANI: Snake ordeal? What is that?

NAGA: You know the ant-hill under the banyan tree. Almost like a mountain. A King Cobra lives in it. Say you will put your hand into the ant-hill –

RANI(*Screams*): What?

NAGA: Yes. And you pull out the King Cobra. And take your oath by that Cobra.

RANI: I can't! I can't!

NAGA: There is no other way.

RANI: ...

NAGA: No, it won't bite. Only, you must tell the truth.

RANI: What truth?

NAGA: The truth. Tell the truth while you are holding the cobra.

RANI: What truth? Shall I say my husband forgets his nights by next morning? Shall I say my husband brought a dog and mongoose to kill this cobra, and yet suddenly he seems to know all about what the cobra will do will not do?

NAGA: Say anything. But you must speak the truth.

RANI: And if I lie?

NAGA: It will bite you.

RANI: ... And suppose what I think is the truth turns out to be false?

NAGA: I'm afraid it will have to bite you. What you think is not of any consequence. It must be the truth. (*Anguished*) I can't help it, Rani. That's how it has always been. That's how it will always be. (*Nagamandala*, Act Two, 286-287).

In the Ramanujan's tale, the serpent lover decides to do a favour to Kamakshi through a plot. He wants to manipulate the convention of purity test in the form of snake ordeal in which he can appear as a serpent and allows her to get through the test without harming her though her oath or vow is false. In the myth, the serpent as supernatural element falsifies the convention of purity test and turns it to the advantage to its beloved with its power changing its form as it wishes. Kamakshi gains confidence as she knows that the serpent lover has assured her that the serpent would not bite her. On the other hand, in *Naga-Mandala* it is depicted vice versa. Naga offers suggestions to Rani to prefer the snake ordeal and yet forewarns her that if she fails to speak truth, she is bound to lose her life as the snake would bite her then and there. Naga does not relax the principle of snake ordeal for the sake of Rani who has been impregnated by him only. Thus, Rani suffers from confusion and fear.

The depiction of snake ordeal in *Naga-Mandala* is different from that in the tale of Ramanujan. In the latter, Kamakshi lodges a complaint with the king while his court is in session the next day. He states that he has not slept with her even once since their marriage so that he alleges that his wife has not been faithful to him. Kamakshi responds to his charges at once denying them by stating that he has been coming to her in the owing to which she has become pregnant. She also adds that if they do not believe her, she is ready to go through the purity test by holding the snake in the Siva temple. The test of purity is depicted thus:

The elders agreed to the chastity test. The whole adjourned to the Siva temple. There was an awesome five-headed snake coiled round the Sive-linga. Kamakshi concentrated all her mind and senses, and prayed aloud so that everyone could hear, "O Lord, the child in my womb is my husband's. All other men are like brothers to me. If what I say false, may you sting me to death". Then she put her hand and took the cobra, who was none other than her lover, the king of snakes. He hung around her neck like a garland, opened his hoods, and swayed gently. The onlookers were awestruck. They said, " *Che, ch*, there has never been such a chaste wife. They were ready to worship her as a paragon of wives, a *pativrata*. The husband was bewildered and felt like a fool. (Ramanujan, 156-157).

Karnad has made a slight change in the depiction of this episode in his play *Naga-Mandala*. Accordingly, the elders have assembled to hear the case of Appanna and Rani. Indeed, the crowd that has gathered there creates the impression that there is fair in the place. The elders advise her that it is appropriate for her to prefer the snake ordeal to the ordeal by holding a burning rod. Rani is adamant and makes attempt to undertake the snake ordeal but withdraws and runs to Appanna as she feels scared of the thoughts of snake-bite. On witnessing her behaviour, the elders advise her to accept her guilt and be free from such dangerous ordeals. Rani, who feels that she is pure, disobeys them and musters courage to go through the snake ordeal ultimately which is portrayed thus:

RANI: ... I'll opt for the ordeal by the Cobra. (*Goes to the ant-hill, plunges her hand into it and pulls the Cobra out.*)

ELDERIII: Be quick now.

RANI: Since coming to this village, I have held by this hand, only two ...

APPANNA (*triumphantly*): There. She admits. Two, she says. Two! Who are they?

RANI: My husband and ...

APPANNA: And—say it, who else?

RANI: And this Cobra. (*Suddenly words pour out.*) Yes, my husband and this King Cobra. Except for these two, I have not touched any one of the male sex. Nor have I allowed any other male to touch me. If I lie, let the Cobra bite. (*The Cobra slides up her shoulder and spreads its hood like an umbrella over her head. The crowd gasps. The Cobra sways its hood gently for a while, then becomes docile and moves over her shoulder like a garland. Music fills the skies. The light changes into a soft, luminous glow. Rani stares uncomprehending as the Cobra slips back into the ant-hill. There are hosannas and cheers from the crowd.*)

ELDER I: A miracle! A Miracle!

ELDER II: She is not a woman. She is a Divine Being!
(*Nagamandala*, Act Two, 292).

When one compares the depiction of the snake ordeal in Ramanujan's *The Serpent Lover* and Karnad's *Naga-Mandala*, one discovers that the former is concerned with the creating of amusement through such superstitious tales. The tale draws the attention of the readers to how Kamakshi brings her lecherous husband under her control with the help of the serpent. The tale does not try to depict Kamakshi as a representation of real woman. It is a tale without any social implications. But Karnad addresses the social reality the plight of womankind and is obsessed with a tendency to exhibit the intrinsic dignity of woman in our

society. Keeping this in mind, the author has portrayed Rani as being unaware of Naga as different person and as being innocent through out the play.

Lastly, the end of Ramanujan's tale has been modified in Naga-mandala in a very significant manner. There is only one climax or end in the tale. As the serpent lover has assured Kamakshi, she and her husband are united happily after the chastity test. Her husband's concubine is also taught a lesson and made maid servant to her. The couple is bestowed with a divine child too. While Kamamkshi leads her family life in bliss like this, the serpent lover wishes to take a note of her life. Thus one night, the serpent lover goes into her house to see how Kamakshi is doing. He sees her lying next to her husband and child, fast asleep, contentment written on her face. He couldn't bear this change due to which he develops rage and commits suicide by twisting himself into Kamakshi's loose tresses. In the morning, Kamakshi experiences heaviness in her hair and she shakes it in order to check what is wrong in her hair. When she does so, the dead snake falls on the floor.

She feels grief over the death of her serpent lover and wishes to show her gratitude to him by paying her tribute in a befitting manner. The tale closes with the narration of her tribute to the carcass of the snake which reads as follows:

She was grief-stricken. Her husband asked, "Why do you weep over the carcass of a snake? How did a snake get into our bedroom anyway?" She replied, "This is no ordinary snake. I had made offerings to him so that I might get my lost husband back. It's because of him you're with me now. He's like a father to my son. As you know, a snake is like a Brahmin, twice born. Therefore, we should have proper funeral rites done for this good snake and our son should do it". The husband agreed, and the son performed all the proper funeral rites, as a son should for a father. Kamakshi felt she had repaid her debt and lived happily with her husband and her son. (Ramanujan, 158).

The tale is wound up like this because its primary motto is to tell how Kamakshi's adulterous husband is reformed and united with her. Such matter as her chastity is secondary and is not important to central focus of the story. Since both men are alive, Kamakshi can not live in peace and hence the death of snake lover is inevitable conclusion to the tale. Karnad is a creative artist obsessed with social concern and experiments in creative art. Thus instead of repeating the same conclusion of Ramanujan's tale, he enriches the art of drama through altering the end of the tale in his *Naga-Mandala*. Indeed, he offers multiple ends suggesting multiple implications inherent in the application of the tale to the social reality.

While Ramanujan's tale fails to explore the state of the mind of Kamakshai's husband after Kamakshi gets through the ordeal, Karand views that it is a very important factor to address as the husband knows that he was not responsible for the wife's pregnancy for certain. Thus the author highlights Appanna's state of mind in one of the ends to the play as given below:

MAN: It's right to say Rani lived happily ever after. But what about Appanna, her husband? As I see him, he will spend the rest of his life in misery. (*Appanna suddenly moves out of Rani's embrace. Speaks to himself*)

APPANNA: What am I to do? Is the whole world against me? Have I sinned so much that even Nature should laugh at me? I know I haven't slept with my wife. Let the world say what it likes. Let any miracle declare her a goddess. But I know! What sense am I to make of my life if that's worth nothing? (*Nagamandala*, Act Two, 294).

Then the author focuses the attention on Rani's mind after the snake ordeal to provide one more end to the play. Though she has been innocent and she has been sleeping with Naga thinking that it is her husband Annappa, she can not fail to discover the fact on the occasion of intercourse with her husband by experiencing its difference with Naga.

Thus her mind too will not be in peace. Such a theme is presented in the next conclusion of the play and it is as follows:

STORY: Well then, what about her? (*Rani does not speak but responds restlessly to the story's dialogue*)

STORY: No two men make love alike. And that night of the Village Court, when her true husband climbed into bed with her, how could she fail to realize it was someone new? Even if she hadn't known earlier? When did the split take place? Every night this conundrum must have spread its hood out at her. Don't you think she must have cried out in anguish to know the answer? ...

When one says, 'And they lived happily ever after that', all that is taken for granted. You sweep such headaches under the pillow and then press your head firmly down on them. It is something one has to live with, like a husband who snores or a wife who is going bald. (*As the story speaks, Rani and Appanna come together, smile, embrace and plunged into darkness.*) (*Nagamandala*, Act Two, 295).

The author is not content with this sort of climax and goes ahead with one more conclusion. As per this, Naga enters Rani's bed room and gets into her hair. In the next morning she feels that her hair weighs

heavy and asks her husband to comb her hair. He does so, the snake falls down on the floor. When Appanna rushed to the next room to bring a stick to sort it out, Rani advises it to escape from there. When the snake disobeys to escape, she allows it to enter her hair and live there happily for ever. In a way, this conclusion seems to be a feminist response to the Siva myth. Whereas Lord Siva keeps his beloved Ganges in his hair and he lives with his wife Parvati, Rani keeps Naga in her hair and she lives with her husband Appanna.

The author addresses the social implications of extra marital relations through adapting Ramanujan's tale 'The Serpent Lover'. Though the conventions like Purity Test or Chastity Test in the form of various forms of ordeals may settle the problems like extra marital relations in the society, the implications of such factors on the mind of individuals are hard to be resolved. He highlights such themes in the first two conclusions to the tale of Rani. In the third conclusion, the author addresses the predicament of women living with two husbands and thus the elimination of illegitimate husband is suggested as a solution to such issues. In the last conclusion, the author endorses the view of liaison of woman in social reality.

TECHNIQUE IN NAGAMANDALA.

The technique of making use of myths and folk forms enriches the play and provides a probe into the socio-cultural practices of the society. In Nagamandala 'story' as a technique is employed to narrate to a playwright the story of Rani. Story is portrayed as a woman. M. Sarat Babu mentions her as, "the Bhagavata of Naga Mandala, a modified version of Yakshagana (folk theatre of Karnataka)." (Sarat, 238). Speaking of the narratives included by Karnad in Nagamandala Rita Kothari:

"The story suggests that the man fills in some details and in this way points to a very fundamental feature of all narratives they are formed, modified and mediated in the process of communication. The play calls for destroying all boundaries, including those between the author and the reader, the read text and the heard performance (Prasad 25)." (Rita, 63).

Such narratives are used to interrogate and deal with conflicts in the society. Rita Kothari asserts:

"Closures seal possibilities and closed narratives become oppressive. Karnad prises them open to show fissures and to facilitate an articulation of conflicts." (Rita, 64).

Indian society with its rules and regulations is portrayed through the dialogues. The conversation between Appanna and his newly wed wife Rani during the meal:

“Rani : Listen – (Fumbling for words) Listen – I feel frightened –
alone at night.

Appanna: What is there to be scared of? Just keep to yourself. No
one will bother you. Rice!

Rani : Please, you could –

Appanna: Look, I don’t like idle chatter. Don’t question me. Do as
you are told and you won’t be punished. (Finishes his meal,
gets up) I’ll be back tomorrow for lunch.” (*Nagamandala*,
Act One, 254-255).

In order to depict Rani’s loneliness her day-dream is portrayed where she recalls her favourite nursery tale and imagines an eagle taking her to her parents who caress her affectionately. The scene shifts add texture to the play. Kurudavva is a character introduced by Karnad who guides Rani towards maturity. She gives Rani roots and advises her to grind it into a fine paste and mix it into Appanna’s food. Naga, a king Cobra consumes it as Rani afraid pours it into the ant hill. Naga takes the form of Appanna and starts visiting her. Then Rani enjoys his company and then onwards night and day has a different story. Appanna’s duality can be viewed in the dialogues between Naga and Rani.

Rani : You talk so nicely at night. But during the day I only have to open my mouth and you hiss like a.... stupid snake. (Naga laughs). It's all very well for you to laugh. I feel like crying.

Naga : What should I do then..... stop coming at night? Or during the day.

Rani : Who am I to tell you that? It's your house. Your pleasure.

Naga : No, let's say, the husband decides on the day visits.

And the wife decides on the night visits. So I won't come at night if you don't want me to.

((*Nagamandala*, Act One, 271-272).

The dialogues speak of the women's fear, psychological traits and the traditional Indian roles. Santosh Gupta opines:

"Sudhir Kakar finds that these factors make it difficult for social scientists to gain insight into women's psychological inner being. It is a remarkable achievement of Karnad's play that he adapts this 'man-oriented' folk tale in such a manner that it becomes a representation of the experience of man and woman in the psychologically transitional phase." (Santosh, 250).

The flames gathering in a temple is a brilliant technique by Karnad which represents women gathering at home or at some places and speaking of their own stories. Santosh Gupta observes:

“The female experience expressed in female narratives is woven within the folk tale as the “flame” tells her story to the professional, male play wright.” (Santosh, 251).

The point of view of women is expressed which deals with her openness only when confronted with compassion and love. The creation of a feminized form is an exemplary art by an artist like Karnad. Pranav Joshipura asserts.

In Naga – Mandala, Karnad has rejected the value of emotional identification. According to Girish Karnad:

“The energy of folk theatre comes from the fact that although it seems to uphold traditional values, it also has the means of questioning these values, of making them literally stand on their head. The various conventions – the chorus, the mask, the seemingly unrelated comic episodes, the mixing of human and non-human worlds – permit the simultaneous presentation of alternative points of view, of alternative attitudes to the central problem. To use a phrase from Bertolt Brecht, these conventions then allow for ‘complex seeing.’ ” (Pranav, 258).

The use of the chorus and music and the songs sung by the Flames and the shape shifting are the various techniques intellectually woven by Karnad. The story comes out from the old woman's mouth wears a sari and walks out. Here the technique is introduced to convey the message that stories should not be confined to oneself. The non-naturalistic techniques of ancient India are focused. The title of the play is not human but of a snake. S. R. Jalote states:

“In Naga – Mandala Karnad has rejected the value of emotional identification and catharsis. The play leaves the audience in possession of their critical faculties, so that they may learn something conducive to social realism.”
(Jalote, 256).

IV. CONCLUSION :

Hayavadana is based on two important previous texts. The first text is the sixth story in Vetala Panchavimsati. Vetala narrates the story of transposed heads in the depiction of Dhaval –Madana Sundari- her brother. The philosophy of the story is to assert that the head is the determining factor of a person. Thomas Mann wrote a novella based on this story. He has changed the names and the relationships of the characters. Dhaval, Madana Sundari and her brother are changed into Shridaman, Seeta and Nanda respectively. The relationship of Nanda with

Seeta is not that of a brother and a sister. On the contrary he is depicted as a friend of Shridaman. He has also changed the caste of the characters. While Dhaval is a washer-man in the Vetala Panchavimshati, Shridaman is Brahmin in Mann's story. There is also a change of perspective in Mann's story. He rejects the logic that the head is the man. On the contrary, he argues that it is wrong to unite beauty with beauty and intellect with intellect. On the other hand, he suggests that beauty has to be united with intellect and vice versa.

Though, Karnad adopts these two texts for his *Hayavadana*, his perspective makes a departure from both of them. He discusses the social and moral issues of society. He tries to oppose the patriarchal domination in making Padmini as rebel against the restriction imposed on woman. Then the notion of fidelity and chastity is also reviewed in the light of modern context. The problem of the exchange of heads is not concerned to Devadatta and Kapila in terms of the notions called self and non-self. It is also concerned with Padmini because she has to live with the man whose head is Devadatta's and body is Kapila's. It questions the relevance of this tradition of chastity.

Girish Karnad has adapted Ramanjun's two tales for making his play *Naga-Mandala* to address certain issues in the contemporary society and to review the form of drama at present. It also offers multi

dimensional perspective on the practice of extramarital act. Rani is a helpless victim of male-chauvinism which glorifies monogamy for woman and polygamy for men and sanction to man the indulgence in extramarital affairs. As a social reformer in spirit, he ridicules this convention by depicting Appanna as being cuckolded by Naga. At the same time, he is conscious of such radical opposition and thus throws light on the fact that how it is likely to affect both the husband and the wife. However, he knows that woman's liaison is found in the society amidst several injection of prohibitions. Thus it is reflected in the last conclusion to the episodes of Rani.

Besides, Rani represents the wife in the conventional joint family set-up. She has no easy access to her husband. Though the husband whom she sees during the day and with whom she shares her bed are one and the same, he appears to be different persons because of the lack of access for her to husband during the day time. Husband and wife seldom meet in privacy during the day time. Karnad hints at this social reality subtly in the episodes of Rani and Appanna.

Karnad is a genius in the field of drama. His dramas are about drama in a way. In other words, they form a poetics of drama in a very subtle manner. He presents the present status of a dramatist in the characterization of MAN. As there is deterioration in the field of drama,

the condition of a dramatist is like MAN who is facing the acid test of 'do or die'. He evinces that if the dramatists fail to create good dramas, they are bound lose the audience in the episodes of Flames who try to disperse before the story closes. He suggests that art should give multi dimensional perspective on any notion of reality by giving up those stereo types of the bygone ages. He has provided model in the characterization of MAN, STORY and FLAMES especially. STORY is the possesor, narrator and character all rolled into one in *Naga-Mandala*. MAN is a character of the sub plot, alter ego of the author, interlocutor cum narrator and art critic in Naga-mandala. Thus though Karnad adapts Ramanujan's tales in Naga-Mandala that he does emerge as a unique creator of plays is testified in making *Naga-Mandala*.

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