

## **Cultural Analysis of Indian Women in Patriarchal Society in Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala***

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### **Abstract**

Literature is a record of social living and the mindset of the society, in the same way Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* (1988) discusses highly about the culture of Indian patriarchal society and the oppression of women in the society. The researcher has analysed the ancient Indian culture and the obstacles faced by the women because of the culture.

### **Culture**

Culture is a collect of data about a particular area or society. The interpretation of cultural representations is to gain new knowledge or an understanding through analysis of the information and gaining the trends, effects made by culture. Indian culture is well portrayed by Karnad and also the suppression of the women. Through culture the researcher finds the registered texts, images, stories and myths. The purpose of analyzing the culture is to develop the analytical tools for reading and understanding a culture practice and form which happen in past and the present.

## Indian Culture

Indian culture has distinct of thousand cultures in various areas like language, literature, religion, music, dance, food and the customs followed in various parts. India is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and other religions. Traditionally, dowry was considered as a share of the family wealth. Karnad shows the religion of Hinduism.

## Status of Women in India

In patriarchal society, men are given superior status. Women in such a society are brought up in such a way that they never see themselves as independent individuals. The play focuses on gender narratives and their presentations through cultural perspectives. Indian patriarchal society, it is observed that men practice double standards. They enjoy privileges which they deny to women.

## Synopsis of the play *Naga-Mandala*

Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* is based on two oral tales from Karnataka which is heard from his Professor A. K. Ramanujan, who collected many folktales from different parts of India. The play significantly holds the culture and psychological significance. *Naga-Mandala* is one of the most noteworthy plays by Girish Karnad and also one of the most notable milestones in Indian English drama. The play is an amalgamation of myth, ritual and imaginative writing along with an analysis of the social situations of the times.

Chastity is a value invented by patriarchal culture and accepted by women. (Deswal 7) The focus of this play is on the lives of men and women in diverse relationships,

bringing out the patriarchal ethos which sets the tone in interpersonal relationships. Characters like Kurudavva and Rani are shown as sufferings and through them the writer highlights the subordinate role of women in Indian society.

Elder II: Come, child. The iron rod is hot and ready.

Rani: No. I want the ordeal by the Cobra.

(Goes to the ant-hill, plunges her hand into it and pulls the Cobra out.)

Elder III: Be quick, now.

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

Appanna: (Triumphant.) There. She admits it. 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 me. (Karnad 39)

The play symbolizes the fate of Rani in traditional patriarchal society like India. It highlights a young bride in a joint-family interacts with her husband in two absolutely divergent

ways. Karnad has also very thoroughly exposed the patriarchal notion of the requirement of chastity in women Rani being accused of unfaithfulness by her husband, has to prove her chastity before the village elders. That is another consequence of the hold of patriarchal on the position of women in society and it is very obvious that a man is not required to prove his 'chastity' or 'purity'. Rani proves her innocence not by challenging the elders and exposing her husband's indifference and lack of faithfulness of her. She has to prove her chastity by taking 'snake-test' rather than the fire test. The same Cobra who in the outer form of Appanna had a relationship with her crawls on her hand and shoulders, leaving her unharmed.

A cuckold husband, having the knowledge of being one, is forced to treat his wife as a goddess and to carry out every wish of hers. Indians have strong superstitious beliefs and this is evident in Appanna also. (Pushpanathan 2)

Karnad showed women as a dependent character towards men in the society. The Indian Culture female have to have a male protector. Here Kappanna is a representation of the Indian socio-cultural reality for his mother.

## Conclusion

Karnad beautifies Indian culture and he wants to bring a kind of awareness toward the present generation to understand the customs followed in Indian society. Karnad makes us to realize the importance of our culture. Karnad depicts how love, marriage and any other bond or value governing the relationship is condition by this, socio cultural context. He has dealt with patriarchy in a complex manner. The researcher finds that Karnad catches the attention to

establish our mind to think about the oppressed women and the obstacles faced by the women due to the culture followed in India.

## Works Cited

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