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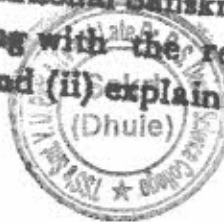
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Authors are requested to use Devanāgarī characters in writing Sanskrit slokas and prose passages. They are also requested to follow the system of transliteration adopted by the International Congress of Orientalists at Athens in 1912 [ऋ=ṛ; ऋ=ṛ; छ=ch].

Traditional Sanskrit scholars are requested to send us articles (i) dealing with the religious & philosophical matters in Purāṇas and (ii) explaining the obscure & difficult passages in Purāṇas.



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## PARADOXICAL HUMANISITIC NATURE WITH REFERENCE TO NAGA - MANDALA

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### Abstract:

Girish Karnad is well – known Indian English playwright and actor. He has written plays in Kannad as well as English. His handling of contemporary themes is praiseworthy. His plays are staged in all over the world and prescribed texts in several universities. The characters are presented in various dimensions. There is paradoxical situation and characters behaviour itself presents paradoxical humanistic nature. The play moves around the unsuccessful marital relationship between Rani (Queen) and her husband Appanna, the emotional and sexual need of Rani is fulfilled by the Naga (Cobra) in disguise of Appanna. The behaviour of the charcters in the play Naga- Mandala is seen paradoxical. some of the characters believe in human vlaues at the same time their behaviour with other charcters in the play found in human as well.

**Keywords:** Paradox, Humanism, Human Value, Inhuman, Relationship Domestic violence

### Introduction:

Through this present research paper, the researcher intends to explore the paradoxial humanistic approaches in the well known play Naga-Mandala by Girish Karnad. The characters of the play reflect some contrasting traits themselves. Girish Karnad has presented male dominated society and women are considered as secondary or inferior in the society.

Girish Karnad is well – known Indian English playwright and actor. He has written plays in Kannad as well as English. His handling of contemporary themes is praiseworthy. He has written plays in Kannad as well as in English. His handling of contemporary themes is praiseworthy. As an actor Girish Karnad has made remarkable impreseeion. His plays are staged in all over the world and prescribed texts in several universities. He is receipient of Jnapith Award for Kannad. Oppression of women is the domnant theme of Karnad's plays. The myths play significant role in his plays and Naga- Mandala is not exception to it. The use of theatrical devices is the prime characteristics of f Karnad.

Naga- Mandala is one of the greatest plays of Girish Karnad. The play is based on the two oral tales of Karnataka. These two tales were heard by Girish Karnad by his mentor Prof. A.K, Ramanujan thereafter he converted it in a dramatic form. The play is full of myth, paradox and irony. The real charm of the play lies in the presentation of characters. The characters are presented in various dimensions. There is paradoxical situation and characters' behaviour iteslf presents paradoxical nature. Even the treatment of the characters in the play is also paradoxical to one another. The play moves around the unsuccessful marital relationship between Rani (Queen) and her husband Appanna, the emotional and sexual need of Rani is fulfilled by the Naga (Cobra) in disguise of Appanna. When she becomes pregnant the elders of the village order her to put the hand in the anthill and take out Naga. As she follows the instruction , elders are shocked to see



that Naga doesn't bite her. This action of the Naga proves the chastity of the of Rani. Fianlly Rani and Appanna live happily.

#### Story of Rani and Appanna:

The behaviour of Appanna for Rani is paradoxical. He locks his wife Rani is really inhuman gesture from his side. To lock someone for day and night is not accepted in the society. He hates his beautiful and innocent wife and loves concubine. Rani, who should be respected and treated as a queen she is treated as maid servant by Appanna. He only asks her to serve him food in the afternoon and depart the home after having lunch. Rani says to Kurudawa "He does not talk a word beyond ordering me "Do this" "Do that" and serve food" (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 11) On the contrary he spends much time with concubine who doesn't deserve it. When Rani's purity is proved at end of the play the narrator states that "For Appanna's concubine presents for the trial. When she saw Rani's glory, she felt ashamed of her sinful life and offered on her own to do menial work in Rani's house." (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala*, 44). This inhumanity shows paradoxical behaviour of Appanna. Appanna brings dog to keep watch on her when she is locked by him. It is really unbelievable that gives freedom to dog keep him outside the house and Rani is locked inside. It means animal is treated in proper manner but not human being. Appanna's love is more for the dog than his wife. He treats the dog in a friendly way but not Rani. When he returns home, he wishes dog in friendly way, "Hello, my friend! Did we have any intruders tonight?" (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 22). Appanna is really a selfish and professional man. When there is need for the dog he treats him in friendly way but once the dog is bitten by the snake he says that, "It is dead! Dead! I paid fifty rupees for it" (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 31). This inhumanity is the striking feature of his personality.

Rani is a sensitive, innocent and kind woman who cares for her husband even though he misbehaves with her. He beats Rani brutally. When Rani doesn't answer to his question where she has been at the time of dog's death. Appanna does domestic violence. It is shown in the play "Appanna slaps her hard. Rani collapses to the floor" (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 19). Though Appanna is not behave humanly with her still she is hesitant to give paste of the strong roots to her husband. Even she slaps herself on her cheeks when she thinks to give him strong paste of roots given by Kurudawa because it looks like blood. She says to herself,

"How could I be sure that he would not notice this curry looking like boiling blood or red poison? And then --- even if he does not see it --- how can I be sure that it does not dangerous. Suppose something happens to my husband what will be my fate then? That little root of piece made him ill. Who knows that bigger piece will do to him?" (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 18)

He is an insesitive man but Rani is equally sensitive which makes her true human being. She believes in human values. It reflects Rani's typical nature of submissive Indian wife. It presents the paradoxical humanisitic nature. Though Appanna gives Rani secondary treatment in house but Rani accepts his dominant role as a husband in the family. She says to him "Who am I to dictate that to you? It is your house. You can come and go at your pleasure" (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 24). It focuses on the gender inequality and secondary position of women in the society. It is the





goodness and humanistic approach of Rani that prevents her to deny the dominating role of her husband.

### Story of Rani and Naga (Cobra):

The paradoxical nature is seen in the relationship of Rani and Naga as well. Naga himself who is in disguise of Appanna says that don't be afraid of cobra. It is believed in Indian society that wives have no right to ask the questions, and husbands can ask questions. They can keep watch on them and be suspicious about the character of them. When Naga says to Rani I shall come twice a day, at night and of course mid day and whatever may be the reason don't ask me any question and reason behind it. After listening this Rani replies to him, "No, I won't. The pig, the whale, the eagle none of them asks any questions. So I too won't either. But they ask it again. So I can too, can't I?" (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 27). It is paradox that women can do anything but women have many formalities and restrictions. It is really inhuman to treat women and not to give them freedom to ask questions. They should have also be given equal right and authority like men.

Rani becomes pregnant because of Naga but Naga wants to keep this news secret. He has problem how to accept this fact. It is a fact, he is Appanna but is being disguised form of Naga. She says to him I have become a wife, woman and going to be a mother its only because of you. I am not a parrot or a cat, or a sparrow. It is really a great feeling for every woman to conceive child. Due to passive attitude of Naga even she thinks to abort the child. It means Naga's passive attitude forces her to think about abortion of a child. When Naga tells her to keep this fact secret, she asks to Naga, "What do you want me to do the child? Shall I have it aborted? ... I may find sharp instrument in the kitchen like a ladle or a knife. Or I can ask Kurudawa's help" (Karnad, *Naga-Mandala* 35). This is really inhuman thinking of Rani. She has to clearly tell Naga whatever be the reason I don't think to abort my child. Rani, who is really a very sensitive and victim of patriarchal society think to do this inhuman act. This insensitivity shows paradoxical behaviour of Rani.

Naga has fulfilled the most required desires of Rani. He has given her love, sexual pleasure, emotional attachment and child also. Rani has also got a changed husband in the form of Appanna. When Rani successfully passed the trial of keeping her in the anthill and holding Naga, her chastity is proved, it is only on the suggestion and cooperation of Naga. Her husband begins to love her even he has accepted her child as well. It is possible only because of Naga. Naga is now infatuated to her. He wants to meet her at night. He cannot control himself. When he goes to meet her and finds she is happily sleeping beside Appanna, and he gets angry. He doesn't bear it. He becomes jealous to see Rani is lying in the arms of Appanna. After seeing this sight Naga says to himself "No, I can't bear. Someone must die. Someone has to die. Why shouldn't I kill her. If I bury my teeth into her breast now, she will be mine--- mine forever." (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 45). It indicates the paradoxical behaviour of Naga. Once who loves her and wants to see her happy now wishes to kill her. There is a sacrifice in love but Naga wants to kill his most beloved person in the life out of his possessive nature. It is really paradoxical, one has to care dear one but Naga's intention is to kill Rani.

### Story of Kurudawa:



The paradoxical humanist nature is found in the story of Kurudawa, her husband and son, Kappanna also. Kappanna loves his mother Kurudawa though she is blind. He cares and carry her on his back. It is true humanity to love and care for mother. He wants to be more strong and powerful for carrying his mother on his back. He says to Kurudawa, "Do you know what I ask for when I worship Lord Hanuman of the Gymnasium every morning? For more strength. Not to wrestle. Not to fight. Only so I can carry you around" (Karnad, *Naga- Mandala* 8). It is moral and human aspect of Kappanna's character. At the same time Kurudawa wants to help Rani but Kappanna is against it and doesn't wish to interfere in her life. It is inhuman act of Kappanna. He should help the woman like Rani who is in problem.

Kurudawa is a blind lady and nobody wishes to marry her. She gives her husband paste of the roots which is given to her by medicant. The medicant advised her to give the smallest piece of roots first but she gave him a middle sized one. It shows her inhuman act for getting married she cheated an innocent man. She doesn't care for his health, it maybe harmful for him but she is in such hurry for marriage. It is an inhuman deed on Kurudawa. At the one hand she wants to help Rani on the otherhand she has deceived her husband. It is a paradoxical behaviour of Kurudawa. There is contrast humanist nature of Kurudawa is presented by Girish Karnad.

#### Conclusion:

The behaviour of the characters in the play *Naga- Mandala* is seen paradoxical. some of the characters believe in human values at the some their behaviour with other characters in the play is found inhuman as well. Most of the time humanity is reflected in the their behaviour but circumstances and situations force them to behave inhumanly. Some of the characters are seen round, they change and show their human attitude like Appanna who at the change and accept his wife and child happily. On the contrary Naga's jealous nature make him inhuman. It is seen in the play that society is mixture of both good and evil forces and they go hand in hand. In the same way both types of people are also seen in the society. They try to follow human values but change according to the situation. This human instinct of man is remarkably observed in the play.

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