

## MYTHICAL ELEMENTS IN GIRISH KARNAD'S NAGAMANDALA

*P. Lakshmanan & P. Eswaran*

*Research Scholar, Department of English, Selvamm Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Namakkal, Tamil Nadu, India*

**Received: 11 Dec 2018**

**Accepted: 18 Dec 2018**

**Published: 31 Dec 2018**

### ABSTRACT

*This paper entitled on mythical elements in GirishKarnad's Nagamandala. Mythology is the interpretation and study of sacred tales or fables of a culture which deal with various aspects of the human condition such as good and will; the meaning of suffering; human origins; the origin of place-names; cultural values, and traditions, the meaning of life and death.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Mythical Elements, Interpretation, Human Condition, Human Origins, Life and Death*

### INTRODUCTION

Mythology has played an integral part, throughout the world in every civilization. It is remembered as the religion of the ancient past. Mythical stories make up the corpus of ancient mythology. Myth can be defined in two ways. It is a sacred idea which inherited over generations. Second, it is an absurd, irrational and fantastic concept about the world that appeals to unsophisticated minds.

The history of English drama is as old as the human being. There is Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sircar, GirishKarnad, and Asif Kapadia contributed a lot to form Indian English drama. The most myths used in the plays of GirishKarnad. He became back to the Indian myth.

This paper entitled on mythical elements in "Nagamandala" by GirishKarnad. GirishKarnad resorts to myths in his play Nagamandala. A myth is not just a device to look back the past. It is also an instrument to analyze the present and ponder about the future. His subjects are not only men and women from an ancient race but the people of common can be analyzed to reveal contemporary tendencies.

GirishKarnad's play Nagamandala is dense with mythical references which stimulate the sensory perceptions of the readers. They prove to be instrumental in building a theme and for the progression of the plot. The artist, keeping in view the treatment of myth in toys to reinstate them by applying them an aesthetic structure of his writings. The mythological plot and structure of the play are presented in four dimensions.

On the first narrative level, the frame tells the story of an author whose plays were so boring the audience often went to sleep for this crime. The author is condemned to death unless he manages to remain awake for one full night before, the end of that month. The night of this theatrical performance is his last chance. We hear his repeated lament that he may die within the next few hours.

The second and third narrative levels contain the elements of magic. The second is formed by the gossip type tales that a group of personified flames tells each other when they gather at night after their work got over. The flames have chosen to go to the same ruined temple where the author is waiting for his plight. When he sees them arrive he hides behind a column. He closely follows their stories.

On the third narrative level, there is the tale told by one of the flames. It wants to be forgiven by women who knew a beautiful story. She refused to tell it and share it with other people. One day, that story taking advantage of the fact that the woman was sleeping with the mouth open. It escapes. It transformed into a young lady. The song that accompanies that lady turns into her beautiful sari. Thus the story personified on the fourth narrative level relates the life of Rani who is the main character of Nagamandala. The character of Rani is not a woman in person. It is a woman in the effort so it was unstable. It had no identity. The writer suggests her proper name in the opening lines of act one she is a young girl her name is not a matter but she is the only daughter. The first strand of the broader mythical design is the development of the thesis point starts.

Rani's husband, Appanna, takes her to his house after their marriage. He treats her like a caretaker and a servant. They have no physical relationship. Their marriage is incomplete. It is because he is interested in a concubine. So he spends his nights with that woman instead of his wife. He comes home to satisfy his basic needs like bathing and eating especially for lunch Rani sacrifices her pleasure. She serves her husband faithfully. Every night Rani is left alone by her husband.

So she pines for liberty and reunion with her parents. Appanna locks her every night and so her dramas become sources of relief for her. She asks an Eagle and ask him to take her to her to take her to her parents. Then she talks to her parents embrace her and cry. They care for her and kiss her. The drama serves as an escape mechanism for Rani.

The plot progresses further with the introduction of the characters Kurudava and her son Kappanna their appearance serve as life in Rani's hard times. Kurudava being a silent observer inspects. The house of Rani through the eyes of Kappanna. She discloses the affair of Rani's husband with a where Kurudavva provides Rani a magical root to cost a spell on her husband. The taste of the root will open eyes of Appanna. He will sniff after that bitch. He will make Rani as his wife instantly. That enhancing root is a sigh of hope for Rani. Later on, while cooking curry with the paste of the root she observes it boils over, red as blood. So she hesitates to serve the curry to Appanna. She keeps that curry nearby ant-hill. A Cobra dwells in the nearby ant hill. It eats the curry. The miraculous root was aimed at Appanna but cast a spell on the Cobra, this leads to the first appearance of Naga.

Nagas are serpent and goni figures in Hindu mythology. They have a friendly disposition. They are the symbol of fertility and regeneration. Nagas take the shape of Appanna and approach Rani at midnight. Naga adorns her beauty with his mesmerizing words and calls her 'tender bud'. He tries to come close to her Rani looks confused. She is also hesitant. The meeting of Naga and Rani continues. She is on the rack of indecision. She calls it a drama. And as carnad suggests: 'they make love'. Later Rani realized that she is not fantasizing about these nocturnal meetings she becomes pregnant.

The second part of the mythical plot in antithesis. An Innocent utterance of Rani's invites a tough time for her. Appanna brands her a slut. He questions her about chastity. He says that he locked her in and yet she managed to find a lover. He also wants to who makes her pregnant. In the night Naga visits Rani. He informs her about the Elder's judgment which

will be going to be held in the morning. Rani frightens. She pleads him to save her from humiliation and takes his words back.

Though myths seem to uphold traditional values, they have also been the means of questioning the values. These myths focus and question the patriarchal moral code. Its demands the faithfulness of a woman to her husband but not the faithfulness of a man to his wife.

Naga's words bring translation for her when he informs, her that it cannot be done. He advises her to undertake a snake ordeal. Rani trembles with a tear, she asks Naga won't the Cobra bite her the moment she touches it. She added that she will die like a dog and his mongoose. Naga informs her that the Cobra will not bite her unless she tells a lie. The very next day Appanna goes to the village elders. A huge crowd gathers in front of Rani's house. The elders of the village suggests Rani to do promise by holding red-hot iron in her hand. Appanna proposes to the Elders to throw Rani and her illegitimate child into boiling oil.

Naga's love story may have a romantic vein, but it gives a real message to all and sundry that it is a sin to subject one's wife to tortures and deny her the rights of a wife; otherwise, he will be forced to sing paeans in the honor of one who has cuckolded her. It is a nemesis which one should avoid. Naga's love is, therefore, the most important part of the play and it will be unwise to consider it a sin.

## REFERENCES

1. Karnad, Girish. *Nagamandala*. Oxford University, First published 1990, 11<sup>th</sup> impression 2011.
2. *Naga Chayya*. By Girish Karnad. Dir. Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry. Per. The Company. Darshan. 2005. Performance.
3. Agarwal, Malti. Preface. *English Literature: Voice of Indian Diaspora*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers Ltd, 2009. Print
4. Allana, Nissar, ed. *A Tributeto Bertolt Brecht*. New Delhi: Theatre and Television Associates. 1993. Web.
5. *Naga-mandala: A Play with a Cobra*. New Delhi: OUP, 1990
6. *The fire and the Rani*. New Delhi: OUP, 1998.
7. Belsey, C. *Critical Practice*. London: Routledge, 1991. Web.
8. Karnad, Girish. *Nagamandala*. Oxford University. First published 1990. 11<sup>th</sup> impression 2011
9. *Naga Chayya*. By Girish Karnad. Dir. Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry. Per. The Company. Darshan. 2005. Performance
10. Pandey, S., & Das, G. (2018). *Plays of Girish Karnad as a Social Document*
11. Agarwal, Malti. Preface. *English Literature: Voice of Indian Diaspora*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers Ltd, 2009, print.

