

# *Tuglaq* elucidates the eternal existence of the supreme power and the perishable human power

P.Subbiah Senthil Kumar  
Assistant Professor  
Department of English  
Arumugam Pillai Seethai Ammal College,  
Thiruppathur.

## Abstract

Lord Krishna tells that God is omnipresent and it is God who guides the life of people. As Tughlaq tells that he has God as his companion, it is clear that he shows deeper understanding of life though he is trapped in passion. His life leads him to failure and suffering. At last the message conveyed by the playwright is that God is the Supreme Being and not man.

Tughlaq's awareness that life is short makes him to sacrifice his life for the people. Tughlaq says that King is not a king if he is not one with his subjects. The Struggle he experiences to define himself as a King, the more he becomes fragmented. The drought situation in Doab causes cracks in the soil is symbolic of a fractured kingdom.

In the play *Tughlaq*, Karnad uses symbols and allegory to focus the contemporary history. The Rise and fall of prayer reveals the fact that life is corrupted at the very source. Politics prevents the man of prayer which only can save. After reading this play one can come to the conclusion that the idealism of a ruler can ruin him. Secularism in a country like India is the concept which is alien of times. But it is sad that the Indians are controlled not only by politicians but by the saints and heads of religions also interfere in politics which is a play of see- saw. People blindly trust religious leaders and follow them. In India People's life is corrupted due to the interference of the saints and politicians. Atlast People of India suffer as they suffered during rule of Tughlaq.

The character of Tughlaq evokes the mind of readers not one but many political characters of the colonial and post-colonial India by embodying their different impulses. Here Girish Karnad represents Gandhi's experiment with truth, Nehru's aim at cultural modernity and Indra's self-destructive

authoritarianism for their idea of national welfare. Indra Gandhi's brilliant leadership quality reflects in Tughlaq's character. Her effort to modernize India and her reformative ideas made her the most controversial political person of her time.

By evoking Gandhi, Nehru and Indira, Karnad's Tughlaq lends contemporary relevance to the multiple aspects of his personality.

Tughlaq resembles the politicians of the present world by playing dual role. The strategy of the Sultan is same to the techniques followed by those who are in power to kill the opponents and also that of the opponents to destroy the rulers. In *Tughlaq*, those who are in power create inconvenience to the people by demanding bribes from them.

Even in the present times, crores of rupees are spent to the upliftment of poor but their condition remains the same as all money is swindled by the politicians and administrators. Today's India is in no way different from that of the conditions which prevail during the time of Tughlaq.

In the play *Tughlaq*, Karnad reveals the worst condition of Tughlaq's time with Nehru's vision of modern in his attempt to westernize socially and politically during his era of idealism in the country. Karnad tells history in the present context which raises the fundamental, social and political issues in Indian Society for a better future. The play shows the new politics of India and understanding of its socio-political conditions. The historicity of the text in its understanding shows Tughlaq as a man of paradoxes who comes to throne as a dreamer and a man of action, devout and godless.

Karnad's using of history in contemporary context shows the fact there are many leaders akin to Tughlaq who fails to sustain their own visions in politics in spite of their integrity and honesty. Tughlaq thinks that it is his duty to protect and govern his people. But he fails in committing murders, upset the economy and violate moral codes are the reason for his failure. Lacking Practical Knowledge about contemporary reality and knowledge on human character proves him to be a villainous king.

Karnad develops Tughlaq character as a parallel to Nehru and his abortive actions are similar to Nehru's dream plan which was not only useless but aggravated the existing situations. He creates Tughlaq as a monster who preys upon his own people under the guise of a saviour. Karnad changes the history of

Tughlaq into myth to show the idealistic personality of the Indian leader whose vision became failure one, in post colonial Indian Society. Historicity of the text shows that honest politicians become disastrous for India. Karnad confirms that the ever-increasing criminalization of politics today is indicative of the failure of role models to rule the country.

History is the source of knowledge. The pity is that human beings are not ready to learn lessons from it. Karnad Projects the truth and universality that history conveys in its texts.

Karnad's dramas are deeply rooted in Indian tradition. He revives the old tradition by the use of archetypal myths, because their importance never dies.

Through the interpretation of myth, Karnad says that knowledge without love, compassion, understanding and humanity will lead to ego, jealousy and destruction. The entire play deals with violence like bloodshed, betrayals jealousy, pride and anger. Karnad finds the myth relevant to the contemporary society. Mishandling of Knowledge leads the world towards destruction.

Girish Karnad's use of drama is an important means of expression. Though he is preoccupied with history, mythology and tradition, he is not a romantic idealist. They give a suitable space for him to tackle the problems of contemporary life. He deals identity of individuals and tries to combine national identity with cultural sensibility. An oral and written language which enriches his passion for exploring dramatic languages offered by classical and folk traditions have given him a place among the front-runners of contemporary Indian dramatists.

Girish Karnad wants the reader to examine that have recorded and transmitted the history of the nation. He gets inspiration from Indian story, retold by western writer to deal serious issues regarding identity and completeness. Karnad criticises both traditional and modern discourses which establish in special ways, the dominance of the head over the body, masculinity over femininity and national unity over cultural polyphony.

From the beginning, Karnad stresses that as a playwright he shares his own interest and excitement with the audience at large. All dramatists have to invent their plots from myth, legends, tales and historical narratives.

**WORKS REFERRED****PRIMARY SOURCE**

Karnad, Girish. *Tughlaq*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1972.

**SECONDARY SOURCES**

Bowering, Lewin B. *Haider Ali and the Struggle with the Musalman Powers of the South*, New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2003.

Brecht, Bertolt. On Experimental Theatre. *Perspectives on Drama*. Ed. James

Bree, Germaine. *Camus and Sartre: Crisis and Commitment*, London : Calder and Boyars, 1974.

Cain, William E. *The Crisis in Criticism: Theory, Literature, and Reform in English Studies*. London: John Hopkins Press, 1984.

Camus, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1955.

