



GIRISH KARNAD: A VERSATILE GENIUS

M. KRISHNARAJ

Department of English, Kandaswami Kandar's College, Velur – 638 182, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT:

The current paper examines a variety of personality features that make Karnad a versatile genius in modern India. His writing challenges the reader to consider human life from a fresh angle. One of India's most well-known and diverse writers of the modern era is Girish Karnad. He is a gifted actor, brilliant director and filmmaker, as well as a widely recognised dramatist with a wide range of interests. In Kannada, Hindi, and English, he created feature films, documentaries, and television series. Karnad is a guy of various accomplishments, including actor-director, art critic, and movie star. He has served as an agent of Indian art and culture abroad on behalf of our nation.

KEYWORDS: GIRISH KARNAD; VERSATILE GENIUS; WRITER; ACTOR; DRAMATIST;

INTRODUCTIN:

One of India's most well-known and diverse writers of the modern era is Girish Karnad. He is well-known for his work as a dramatist, as well as for his accomplishments as an actor, director, and filmmaker. He also has a wide range of hobbies. The works of William Shakespeare, Bernard Shaw, Ibsen, Anton Chekhov, Brecht, Jean-Paul Sartre, Eugene O'Neill, Harold Pinter, and Samuel Beckett, amongst others, had a great impact on Karnad's career in the theater. Yayati (1961), Tughlaq (1964), Hayavadana (1971), Hittina Hunja (Bali - the Sacrifice) (1980), Naga-Mandala (1988), Tale-Danda (1990), The Fire and the Rain (1995), and The Dreams of Tipu Sultan (1997) are some of the plays by Karnad that have been chosen for production. These performances have been dubbed into a wide number of other Indian and non-Indian languages. In addition, the English adaptation of Karnad's drama Yayati, which was originally written in Kannada, was released by Oxford University Press in 2008.

He attempts to make connections between the past and present while closely examining the difficulties of modern existence. Karnad is regarded as one of the greatest playwrights in the history of literature. He has received numerous honours and accolades for his incredibly diverse creative abilities.

The current essay examines a variety of personality features that make Karnad a complex writer in modern India. His writing challenges the reader to consider human life from a fresh angle. The research also makes an effort to list the numerous inspirations and influences that contribute to the writer's versatility. Karnad's parents had a big impact on him. Reading and attending the dramatic performances piqued his father's intense curiosity. Additionally, they both enjoyed seeing plays in theatres. Karnad has been exposed to fairy

tales and Puranas tales since he was a little child. He enjoyed going to Sirsi during his youth to see a Company Natak and a Yakshagana. The seeds of his fervent passion for playwriting were actually planted when he was a young boy. The inner nature of a writer is mostly shaped by their early experiences. To put it another way, his early involvement with the Natak enterprises had a lasting effect on his worldview.

In addition to his accomplishments as an accomplished playwright, he has demonstrated his versatile creativity through his tight ties to the television and cinema industries. Samskara, Vansh-Vriksha, Kaadu, Ondanandu Kaaladalli, and Cheluvi are just a few of the successful Kannada films he has written the screenplays for. He is also well known for writing TV dialogue and serials. He has gotten praise from critics and appeared in numerous Hindi and Kannada films. He has acted as the sutradhar (narrator) for a number of the stories in the well-known children's audio book series Karadi Tales. In the audiobook version of APJ Abdul Kalam's autobiographical work, *The Wings of Fire*, he also provided the voice of the former Indian president.

His exceptional contributions to the film industry have resulted in a multitude of accolades and distinctions being bestowed upon him. He was given the President's Gold Medal in recognition of his services to the Kannada film Samskara, which included authoring the language and performing the lead character. These accomplishments earned him the distinction. Additionally, the film was the one that earned him the award for Best Indian Film in 1970, and it was given to him for that film. In 1972, he shared the National prize for Vansh-Vriksha (Kannada) with B.V. Karanth and was given the prize for his contributions. This medal was bestowed in recognition of exceptional achievement in the arts of acting, directing, and scriptwriting. In 1974, the President of India bestowed the Silver Medal of Merit onto his Kannada film, Kaadu, for its recognition as the second-best film to come out of India. In the year 1975, it was one of the films that was screened at the New Delhi International Film Festival. In 1978, the Film Fare Award for Best Storyline was given to him for his work on the Hindi film Godhuli, and he also won the award for Best Director. In that year, Godhuli was made available. The work that he did as the director of the Kannada films Kaadu (1973) and Ondanandu Kaaladalli (1978), in addition to the Hindi film Utsava (1984), was very well received. Both film reviewers and moviegoers praised him highly for the vital roles he played in important Hindi art films such as Swami (1978) and Mahatma (1976). Both "Oedipus Rex" and "Jokumaraswamy," plays that were directed by B.V. Karanth and staged at the Open Air Festival in Bangalore in 1972, had him in the principal parts. Karanth was the director of both plays. In addition to the movies that have already been mentioned, he has also acted in a number of television movies and serials that have been dubbed into Hindi. These productions have been helmed by Mrinal Sen, Satyajit Ray, Shyam Benegal, and a few other well-known directors, among others. He served as a member of the jury for both the International Film Festival, which took place in New Delhi, and the Festival of India, which was held in Britain and London. The Festival of India took place in Britain and London. At the Montreal International Film Festival, he acted as India's official representative on behalf of the nation.

Girish Karnad's lengthy and colourful career as a playwright, director, actor, and filmmaker ended in 1999 when he received the coveted Jnanpith Award. He has so enhanced Indian culture by his significant contributions to the fields of art, literature, drama, and film. He openly acknowledged during his interview with Aparna Dharwadker that playwriting is the only one of the aforementioned fields in which he has a keen interest. He has given Indian English drama's method a genuine dramatic soul. His theatrical work combines the innovative western theatre techniques with the rich indigenous folk culture. He is a leader in contemporary drama, and each of his plays is stage-worthy. Karnad is cognizant of the challenges, obstacles, and challenges involved in staging a play. He gives artists, directors, and anybody else involved in the theatre a free hand as a result. It's noteworthy to note that none of his plays have ever been directed by him. Additionally, he believes that once the playwriting process is complete, he is finished. He therefore grants the director complete freedom to alter his piece without impairing its essential elements. He firmly believes that every performance is a replication and that each performer has the freedom to interpret and deliver it in his or her own unique way. If the actor is not given such creative freedom, the characters may end up serving as the playwright's spokesperson.

He considers his audience when composing a play. He imagines them in the performance space. He pays attention to their responses. Any performance must take into account the theater's audience. To please everyone in the theatre, there must be something meaningful in the performance. The audience's response and admiration determine how well the presentation goes. He revises his plays often till they are flawless. In the presence of his pals, he reads the script before making edits, cuts, and changes to the dialogue and episodes, as well as the addition of new characters and episodes. For his play *The Fire and the Rain*, he spent approximately 37 years of his life working on it.

When we carefully read one of Karnad's plays or when we watch one of his plays being played on stage, one essential question arises in our minds. Why does he prefer to write plays that are based on myths, tales, and historical stories instead of ones that have new topics that are based on contemporary reality? We've already touched on the fact that a writer's formative experiences and impressions have a significant bearing on the person they become as an adult. Given the circumstances, it seems to make perfect sense. He was brought up in a cultural setting that was influenced by the Mahabharata, the Ramayan, and the Puranas. This setting included the folk theatrical tradition. Karnad uses the example of a modern man's predicament in an effort to prove that mythology, history, and folktales still have much to teach us about living in the modern world. Legends and historical events are never-ending wells of motivation and inspiration for writers of creative works. Every person who is creative has an innate connection to the legends and tales that are associated with their own culture. They are trying to encourage him to use his creative side. The moment he begins to unwind them, they immediately take on a rational framework and an orderly arrangement.

First, he draws attention to the many challenges that a modern Indian woman living in a patriarchal society may encounter. He does this by highlighting a variety of concerns. Characters like Chitrlekha from "Yayati," "Padmini" from "Hayavadana," "Rani" from "Naga-Mandala," "Vishaka" and "Nittilai" from "The Fire and the Rain" are all examples of protagonists who accurately portray modern women. Karnad illustrates how, in a culture dominated by men, the existence of women is relegated to the background or marginalized entirely. Second, he investigates existentialist topics like identity, divided personalities, ideological division, and the conflict between the real and the ideal throughout all of his plays. For instance, the topic of responsibility is discussed in his first play, which is titled *Yayati*. *Hayavadana* depicts both the struggle to find one's identity as well as the search for fulfillment in one's life. In *Naga-Mandala*, the anguish and humiliation that a woman must endure within an Indian household are portrayed. His historical work, *Tughlaq*, highlights *Tughlaq's* authoritarian temperament and dreamy qualities by exposing his dual identity. This draws attention to *Tughlaq's* surreal qualities. *The Fire and the Rain* presents a striking contrast between the traditional ways of life of the tribal people and those of the brahminical society. In his plays, Karnad explores a wide range of contemporary topics by drawing from a number of historical and folkloric sources. In each of his plays, Karnad makes an effort to reinterpret the events of the past by placing them within the framework of the current time period. He is well aware of the fact that a gifted artist may be able to assist his society in comprehending the multifaceted problems of the present day.

The exception to this rule is Karnad's drama *Tale-Danda*, which consists of three acts but is still shorter than most of his other works. He admits that Brechtian influences can be seen in the writing of scene-based works such as *Tughlaq* and *Tale-Danda*. These works were written by him. His plays only include a small cast of characters; for instance, both *Hayavadana* and *Naga-Mandala* contain only three main characters apiece. Even while both *Tughlaq* and *Tale-Danda* have a large number of different people in their casts of characters, the focus of the narratives is mostly on the protagonists of each story. As a direct consequence of this, he draws our attention in *Tale-Danda* to Basavanna, King Bijjala, and most importantly, Sovideva, Jagadeva, and Damodar Bhatta. The important characters from "The Fire and the Rain," such as Yavakri-Vishakha-Paravasu and Arvasu-Nittilai, come to mind now. In addition, the following individuals are considered to be the four most important figures in *Bali*: The aspect of the Sacrifice is what keeps our interest throughout the whole of the film. When exactly in the middle of each of his plays our interest is first piqued is unknown but it is definitely there. Scene VI of *Tughlaq*, for instance, depicts the immensely exciting conspiracy against the

Sultan. The plot is described in the play. In addition, the commencement of the changes that will take place in Hayavadana can be identified by the shift from Act I to Act II in the play. In the very final moments of the first act, Rani had a chance encounter in Naga-Mandala, Naga with the guy who will eventually become her lover. In Tale-Danda, the marriage of several people from different castes takes place smack dab in the middle of Act I. This is an extremely complicated event. His mind is slowly but surely piecing together the details of the story's plot and structure. The average length of one of his plays is around ninety pages. The Fire and the Rain is only 74 pages long and is organized into three acts, as well as a prologue and an epilogue, inside its framework.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, Girish Karnad is an influential writer in the field of modern Indian theater. He has garnered popularity not only in India but also internationally. He is a person with several facets to his personality. He is well-known for his technical advances as well as the wide range of topics and subjects that he presents in his work. Alongside contemporary playwrights like as Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sircar, and Rakesh Mohan, he was instrumental in reviving India's rich theatrical tradition.

CITES NOTED:

1. Girish Karnad, Author's Introduction to Three Plays: Oxford University Press, 1997
2. Dharwadkar, Aparna. Interview with Girish Karnad. "Performance, Meaning and the Materials of Modern."
3. Kharat, S.T. The Theme of Betrayal in the plays of Girish Karnad, Ph.D. Thesis, Pune University.

