



A PARADOXICAL NATURE OF NONVIOLENCE AND ADULTERY MIRRORED THROUGH THE CHARACTER OF AMRITAMATI IN GIRISH KARNAD'S BALI THE SACRIFICE

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Abstract:

The eminent playwright of Kannada, Girish Karnad, resided in Sirsi, a small town in Dharwar. Myths were pervasive in the culture at the time. The myth of the cock of dough is the foundation of Bali's The Sacrifice. The 13th century Kannada epic Yashodhara Charite, which can be traced back to two Sanskrit epics from the 11th and 8th centuries, served as the source of inspiration for Karnad's play. Under the name Hittina Hunja, the play made its debut in Kannada in 1980. For its successful production in Kannada and Hindi, B.V. Karanth and Satyadev Dubey made contributions. Later, Prema Karanth and Lankesh tried their hand at producing it. The English version of the play, which Karnad revised, was performed in 2002 at the Leicester Haymarket Theatre in England and was later published in 2004. The roles of the mahout and the Mother Queen were played by well-known actors Naseeruddin Shah and Ratna Pathak. Karnad acknowledges that when he was a teenager, the Cock of Dough myth entered his mind. The play also highlights a conflict between classes. The King, the Queen, the Queen Mother, and the Mahout are the play's four main characters. Despite being a devout Jain, the Queen has an affair with a mahout from a low caste. She has the guts to convince the King to adopt a different religion. Until the play's conclusion, she keeps the identities of the two male characters hidden, the king and the mahout.

Keywords: dough, cock, epic, myth.

Bali: The Sacrifice raises questions about love, loyalty, emotion, support, family traditions, and many other things with the use of one word, 'betrayal'. These significant ideological concepts shape societal and familial circumstances where a wife is expected to sacrifice everything including her name, form, assets, and beliefs for her husband. Karnad has practiced so many aspects of epic theatre in the play.

In the play Bali: The Sacrifice custom of offering animals to the gods is unpleasant. The contradiction between the Jain principle of nonviolence and the Brahminical convention are practised by the queen and the Queen Mother serves as an example of this concept. It is equally annoying and needs to stop that small dough figures that were used in place of real animals are still being distributed. It depicts how deliberate violence has taken the place of actual violence. The play's Queen Mother is conventional and customary. She firmly relies on in occult traditions and ceremonies. She puts her illogical desires on the rest of the family because she herself crazy. Amritamati is the family's voice of logic and sanity. In defiance of the Queen Mother, who thinks her daughter-in-law is disrespectful and rebelling in opposition to long-standing family traditions, the king wed Amritamati, a Jain. She regularly chastises her son for getting married to a Jain. Amritamati dislikes her mother-in-law's reaction to learning about her pregnancy. She finds it difficult to accept the idea of making animal and bird sacrifices to gods. She passionately rejects the idea, calling it absurd.

When the Queen gets ready to take part in the forfeit at the end of the play, she has a delusion that the dough-cock is a live cock crowing; this delusion is an expression of her internal worry and her obsession with peaceful impulses. By the play's conclusion, she seemed to understand the significance of both sacrifice and the sin of adultery. The knife that was used to sacrifice the dough-cock is the one that ends her life. Finally, she is forced to make the ultimate sacrifice. The queen goes insane at the end of the play. She grabs a handful of grains from the tray and places them in her cup while kneeling in front of the dough cock. She states:

“It’s alive. The cock...is crowing!

Here. Have some. Come on.

Eat. Cluck...cluck...

KING: Stop it! Stop it!

QUEEN: Come on, please, eat. Have some. KING: Amritamati!

QUEEN: Cluck...Cluck...Have some.

KING: Have you gone mad? It isn’t alive! Its dough —

QUEEN: Come, Cuckoo... Have shum... KING: I said stop it—Look!

(He picks up the dough and squashes it into a mass.)

It’s dough. Plain and simple! Dough” (240).

The queen suddenly develops a dislike for him at this time and prepares to strike him with her sword after realizing that she intends to kill him when he stirs the dough. She is terrified when she looks at the weapon in her hand because she is a staunch advocate of non-violence. She suddenly thrusts the sword's tip into her belly and tries to kill herself with it, till she finally gives into his embrace. She was so frustrated and kills herself but her previous behaviour aids us to not to lament over her death but to raise questions on it that why she has not try to correct the situations if it was possible. The audience is shown how the queen was lured from her bed by the Mahout's singing and brought to the vocalist in the abandoned holy place. She acknowledges that before having a sexual contact with the man, the music charmed her. The king was ready to support her a lot though she was wrong she was not convinced to do anything.

Amritamati is undoubtedly a lovely synthesis of logical thinking and common sense. Because of her kind nature, she was unable to sever her marriage for the benefit of a dough cock. In the end, she made the decision that she would rather die than see further murders because she was unable to control her emotions. The show begins with her song, which examines how we perceive two different shades of existence. Her song also marks the play's conclusion. It is appropriate to celebrate her journey through the drama, which ends with her demise. From realizing apparent paradoxes to the decision to live a life of conscience, there is a road to be taken.

After the act of her adultery when the king was providing her the solution to wash away her sins she makes fun of his thinking. The king was so willing forget everything and to adjust the situations. He just wants to live happily and peacefully with the queen but she is not ready for doing anything. When the king suggests her about sacrificing the dough she laughs at him and says,

“Then why are you doing it? Why? Blood at least makes sense if you believe in bloodthirsty gods. But this...you can’t knowingly fool yourself” (227).

The Queen represents a new type of a woman. She is not like women who are willing to put their husbands' needs before their own. She marries a Hindu king and is a Jain. After being married, she forces her husband to adopt Jainism rather than the Hindu religion. According to her, she wants to convert him. Karnad portrays a different woman who defies convention through her character. She enjoys listening to music. She once hears the highly chanting song of mahout at night. She loses herself and her place in the desire. In response to the song's allure, she visits the Mahout and commits adultery. She is with the Mahout when she regains consciousness. She doesn't feel that she has done anything wrong. She has no intention to do it. That's why she feels no shame for it. She is very casual to the things which happened to her. After committing adultery with the mahout she tries to run away from there but he was not allowing her to go without knowing her name. When the mahout kept on asking her name she says shamelessly,

“It’s been lovely meeting you. Every minute of it. And you’re ruining it” (192).

She doesn't have any realization of her husband that what he would have been doing right now. She doesn't know that the king is sleeping right now or awaken or searching for her but still when the mahout says that she is not telling him her name as he is very ugly she tries to convince him he is not ugly at all. She is getting let in returning to the kingdom but the mahout is not allowing her to go to her home without knowing her name, at that time too she convinces him and says,

“You’re not ugly, you know. You are lonely --- you don’t want my name. You want someone to talk” (197).

When she returns to the home and the king asks her about the reason for her betrayal. He was really surprised by her act of adultery and not ready to believe that it has just happened. He constantly feels that it can't be a real incident it must be a dream. But the way Amritamati reacts to it shocks him. He was not able to live without her as he loves her too much. When he tells Amritamati that why she has done this to him the answer of her is just unexpected to him. He was not ready to believe the words of the queen when she says,

“I feel fuller. Richer. Warmer. But not ashamed. Because I didn’t plan it. It happened. And it was beautiful” (235).

Even though the king has a very kind personality, the Queen is not feeling joyful in the company of him. She finds the majestic spectacle and grandeur annoying. She is drawn to Mahout and forgets everything when she hears his angelic voice. The queen perceives her existence as a soul-cage. She disregards everything in her quest for a chance and gives in to his music. She felt regret all the time. She usually expected her better half to be a supportive partner, but he never does. In this way, the psychological bondage the queen forged with herself leads to her death. Her words obviously show how miserable she is with all she encompasses and how disappointed she is.

The King loves his wife too much. He has been married to the queen for fifteen years yet have no any child. The noble pair is beneath incredible psychosomatic anxiety to have children so that they can fulfill their responsibility to the kingdom. In the study of a remote temple, Queen Amritamati uncloses herself up in the arms of a vile mahout who humiliates her. The headless idol witnesses their illicit liaisons, but the Queen abstains from being unfaithful. She doesn't feel sorry or humiliated about what happened.

The Queen does not comprehend the sin in her adultery. It is not a violation in her opinion. Thus though Amritamati is the strong holder of the convention of her religion we cannot forget her sin and adultery towards her husband. she is more remembered as an adulterous queen than the devotee of a nonviolence.

References

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