

# Re-Inventing Tradition and Decolonizing the Stage: A Study of Girish Karnads Plays

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## Abstract

*This postmodern blurring of cultural lines has resulted in a universal humanity that can be accessed via a single body of knowledge. The epiphanic moment of confronting the other shifted the focus from Europe to the East, where scholars realized that the epistemic discourse of their own countries reflected the same a priori delimitation of knowledge. The Radhakrishnan Commission, for example, proposed in 1948 that the fields of natural science, social science, and the humanities should study different aspects of reality: facts, events, and values, respectively. In order to dismantle the epistemic dominance of western knowledge and eradicate the homogeneity of discourses, the time has come to highlight, as Bakhtin would have it, the importance of comparative dialogic in establishing cross-cultural dialogic. In a same vein, the Orientalist paradigm has to shift toward a focus on humanistic conversation between South and South and a reconfiguration of the Asian dilemma of singularities. To get a holistic comprehension of human beings, a paradigm shift and rethinking—what Derrida terms Transformed Humanities, New Humanities—is essential.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

As soon as I heard the topic "humanities across cultures," I knew I wanted to read some of GirishKarnad's plays, which include a wide variety of characters from different cultural backgrounds. Since most of his plays have several components, all of which have "tradition" at their core, this paper's focus on "re-inventing tradition" naturally arises from these plays. Because Karnad sought to breathe new life into time-honored characters, the subtitle "reinventing tradition" is fitting for his plays. His debut play, Yahati (1961), written neither in English nor in his native Konkani, yet vividly explores this issue. The play was an instant hit, and it was quickly translated and

presented in numerous other Indian languages. It followed the epic exploits of characters from the Mahabharata, one of the oldest traditions and civilizations. Tughlaq, a gripping allegory on the Nehruvian period, was produced by the National School of Drama, solidifying Karnad's reputation as one of India's most promising playwrights and a potential force for the propagation of ideas about the value of traditional culture and, by extension, mankind. Karnad has made full use of mythical and folk themes, if they have the potential to show other civilizations as symbols of humanity and to bring tradition to the fore. His plays are rife with allusions to Vedic texts, musical styles, dances, instruments, and the people who practice them.

Thus, ballads or simple tale telling, which functioned as customary riches, met the majority of the needs of the earliest theatrical forms.

Girish Karnad is an important playwright because he has returned to the foundations of Indian myth, tradition, and culture to paint a vivid and authentic portrait of modern-day India and its people. All of his plays are accurate representations of Indian culture, including its good and bad points, its history and its relevance to the present day. To put it simply, culture is what makes a society. The cultural ethos of any given civilization is a reflection of the people who live there and the values they hold dear. It is the ideals and principles of life, the common experience of a people, the norms and codes of society, and other aspects of a culture's ethos that are personified in its myths, tales, and folklore. Time and again, Girish Karnad has looked to the mythology and folklore of his own India for fresh ideas.

Karnad draws on India's long literary history for ideas, then spins those concepts into his own original stories. The Mahabharata tale of Yavakiri inspired Karnad to write his first play. The mythological narrative is a morality tale about growing up and accepting one's duties. The Forest canto of the Mahabharata is also the source for the drama *The Fire and the Rain*. It revolves on the struggle between Indra, Vishwarupa, and Vritra and is based on the Yavakiri tale. Mythic stories from a Kannada and a Sanskrit epic inspired Karnad to write two plays: *Bali — The Sacrifice* and *Flowers: A Dramatic Monologue*. Because the primitive imagination draws its inspiration from the natural world, in which it is soaked and saturated, all folklore is religious and frequently based on animism.

Both *Hayavadana* and *Nagamandala* by Karnad have their roots in the Indian folklore tradition. The Sanskrit "Vetal Panchavimashati" is included in both Kshemendra's *Brihat Katha Manjaria* and Somadeva's *Kathasaritsagara*; Thomas Mann's translation of this text is the basis for *Hayavadana*. Karnad drew on the snake mythology that are common in southern India to create *Nagamandala*. Two Karnataka folktales are dramatized here. In reality, several

regions of India are home to vibrant Naga Cult communities. This means that in these two plays, Karnad is essentially creating new canons.

Our very own Indian history best illustrates the diversity of human civilization. Karnad has also written historical dramas about India. Karnad has given these great people from different eras of Indian history a fresh new meaning through the lens of the modern world. Nietzsche writes, "History is necessary to the living man in three different ways: in relation to his action and struggle, his conservatism and reverence, his suffering and his desire for deliverance." To put it another way, knowing about the past helps in making sense of the present. The historical figure of Muhammad-binTughlaq, the ruler of Delhi in the fourteenth century, was as an inspiration for Karnad's *Tughlaq*. Karnad gets his ideas from *Tale-Danda*.

Basavananna, the renowned Sharana poet-saint, and his struggle to erase caste divisions comprise the major premise of the drama, which derives from a real event that occurred in Kalyan in Karnataka in 1168 A.D. Plays like this give modern audiences a taste of India's storied past while also fostering an appreciation for the country's storied cultural heritage.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sravana Jyothi, D. and Dr. Bakyaraj. (2018), Karnad worries about the complexity and incompleteness of the contemporary man's existence. The use of folklore highlights the irony of contemporary life with its basic drives and tensions. Under the influence of western ideologies and systems of knowledge that look at human behavior from diverse aspects, the folk stories become vehicles for contemporary life. The influence of Marxism, Freudianism, and existentialism on his view of the current day is illustrative of the profound shift in contemporary man's perspective on war, human life, and the meaning of existence. It separates man from his metaphysical roots and calls into question the spiritual and moral ideals that restrain his liberty. It is assumed that man interacts and lives in a community with other humans. Girish Karnad demonstrates how these contemporary ideas are at work in classic

stories. A kind of Oedipus complex seems to characterize all mother-son interactions as a result of these ideologies and systems of thinking. The notion of god and religion is emblematic of their powerless state and neurotic mentality, and all the key characters seem to suffer from existential alienation, which is why they resort to violence and brutality. Karnad's past is a reflection of the present in terms of politics, religion, and society.

S.A.R. ABIDI VINITA.S, 2016; In this work, we make an effort to analyze Karnad's plays from a thematic and methodological perspective. In doing so, we will examine the role of marriage in postcolonial culture, with particular attention paid to the dynamics between men and women. Karnad is India's preeminent living playwright, and his work reflects the development of an authentically "Indian Theatre" that is faithful to its traditions while also adapting to modern issues.

Milee Singh (2023), The purpose of this study is to expand the reader's theoretical understanding of Literature Studies by analyzing Nagamandala and Hayavadana by Girish Karnad for underlying themes of Myth and Folk. The article will also benefit research and teaching endeavors, as well as those interested in traditional Indian theatrical culture and legendary and mythological representations. For many years, Girish Karnad wrote plays that often drew on historical and folkloric sources to explore modern issues. Karnad writes about societal themes, but his plays also deal with the fantastic and the real. His boundless vitality digs deep into myths, legends, and folklore to unearth insights into the present. He left an impression on people all around the world. He made an effort to model how to reimagine Indian mythology for modern audiences. It is important to analyze Girish Karnad's early influences on his growth as a playwright before focusing on how he reinterprets mythology and reworks them in his plays to depict modern realities. Karnad's early years were influenced by several different people. He was immersed in a political and social environment where indigenous and Western values were diametrically opposed.

(Bansal, Anupam, and Satish Kumar, 2018), Regarding Appanna's hypocrisy, Dhanavel writes, "Such a hypocritical attitude is rampant in many parts of the country, though women are liberated to a great extent now" (Dhanavel110) in his book *The Indian Imagination of Girish Karnad: Essays on Hayavadana*. Analyzing Nagamandala from a female perspective, Bansal and Kumar write, "Emancipating Women: A Note on Women Empowerment in Girish Karnad's NagaMandala" (158). The female protagonists are bewildered in their quest for identity. The paper "Emancipating Women: A Note on Women Empowerment in Girish Karnad's Naga Mandala" discusses the play's message, which is the need for the emancipation of the women who are expected to play a significant role in the regeneration of an otherwise de-generate society.

Karnad in his interview to Chaman Ahuja says (2015), To put it another way, "when has man ceased to be interested in the relationship between mind and body, in man's quest for completeness" (Talwar & Chakraborty 177)? Padmini's pursuit for enlightenment and physical perfection is symbolic of the impossible goals that can never be attained within the context of our culture. Her situation necessitates a change in the natural order for her to recover, which is impossible. However, for many people like Padmini, the pursuit of fulfillment and self-discovery proves to be a futile endeavor that ultimately proves fatal. Given our society's established social order, women have the ultimate burden of ensuring its integrity, even at the risk of their own lives.

### III. DECOLONIZING THE STAGE

Culture administrator and Renaissance man Girish Karnad made significant strides in decolonizing Indian English theater. The incorporation of Indian mythology, legends, history, folk tales, and present concerns; the creation of characters with deep roots in Indian culture; the use of Indianized English; and the adoption of folk theatre customs all contributed significantly to the decolonization of the stage. This research aims to examine how folk theater (Yakshagana) and Natak Company norms influenced assessments of Karnad's efforts to

decolonize the stage. Karnad also uses techniques from Indian Classical and Modern theatre; however, their focus is on reviving indigenous theatrical practices and ideas.

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Classical or folk traditions were able to reclaim their rightful position in national culture and theatre after the end of colonialism. Cultural decolonization and the reassertion of the vitality and importance of traditional art both arose from the enormous cultural uprising that followed the time of independence. The anti-realist, anti-Aristotelian aesthetic of Indian theater is superior to that of Western theater, and this is reflected in the widespread criticism of realism in Western theater and the development of new theatrical styles like expressionism, the theater of the absurd, and Brecht's epic theatre. Traditional types of theatre are valued for their reviving vitality and high aesthetic quality, whereas contemporary and postmodern theatres and their methods are seen as antiquated. Indian writers are fearful of continuing their new venture because of the influence of theatrical figures like Eugenio Barba, Jerzy Grotowsky, Richard Schechner, and Peter Brooke, who place a premium on classic theatre traditions. The "theatre of roots," as Suresh Awasthi puts it, "has made its presence felt." It's captivating, it excites its audience, and it's being recognized formally. Its origins are in regional theater traditions, but it transcends language borders and takes on an all-Indian aesthetic (48). Directors like B.V. Karanth, Ratan Thiyam, and K.N. Panikkar, along with actors like Girish Karnad, Badal

Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar, Habib Tanvir, and Mudrarakshasa, all rejected Western influences after independence, making room for local culture and traditions in the performing arts.

The use of Indian myths, legends, history, and folklore; characters with deep roots in Indian culture; Yakshagana and Natak Company conventions fused with Indian Classical theatre techniques; and Indianized English to suit the context and milieu all worked to undermine colonial stereotypical models, theories of drama, and cultural hegemony in Karnad's plays. To forward the cause of intellectual and cultural freedom and complete the process of "decanonization and decolonization" (Avadhesh K. Singh, "Interventions," 13), he did more than only respond against colonialism; he also built an ideal for writing. Karnad sets out to compose plays with a clear goal in mind: to de-colonize Indian English Drama by giving new life to Indian history and culture and rescuing them from the clutches of Eurocentric dominance. The most prominent features of Karnad's plays include postcolonial dialectics, the subalternization of Indian English Drama, and nativism. The practice of using indigenous peoples as the focus of dramatic art predates Karnad. Karnad's work stands out because of the way in which he draws on Indian mythology, tradition, and history to create a sense of contemporaneity. By doing so, he shows how topics from the far and distant past can still resonate with modern audiences. By reclaiming Indian history, Karnad gives Indian English Drama a voice and a unique identity. He uses Karnad's plays as a prism through which to examine the development of indigenous awareness and sensibility, and he criticizes the politicized and imperialist roots of the Western literary imagination. Karnad defused the "cultural bomb" that the West employed as its primary weapon to destroy indigenous people's faith in their own names, unity, abilities, and legacy. This bomb was responsible for turning indigenous people's history into a wasteland. What's more, it encourages children to embrace the language and culture of others. Karnad also fought back against the colonizers' attempt to (a) break the will of a people by destroying or devaluing their cultural artifacts. (b) The deliberate promotion of the colonizer's language.

The colonial system threatens the feeling and reality of community, so he resorts to intellectual opposition. His plays effectively depict his struggle for cultural autonomy and his dismantling of the European "construction" of the East/Orient as the Dark Other.

Savita Goel has rightly judged the contribution of Karnad to drama:

Girish Karna is one of the Indian playwrights who have strayed away from the Western model of storytelling and instead explored their own culture for inspiration. Karnad has looked for a way to bring theater closer to the minds of its audiences by adopting a style and method that are both culturally suitable and artistically rewarding. He pondered the question of how the props and costumes used in folk theater may find new life in a contemporary setting. (204).

Literary and cultural autonomy are assured by the strong underlying elements, tactics, character delineation, and choice of language that directly confront colonial psychopathology and the primacy of the West. P. Obula Reddy made a very important insight in this regard:

Indian playwrights like Karnad, Tanvir, Panikkar, and Karanth revert to classical forms in their latest works. It's meant to be experienced and struggled with, molded and reshaped into fresh dramatic shapes that speak to the lives of Indians today. They are reacting to the current historical fact of 'westernization' in India by turning back the clock. There is also an effort to "decolonize the mind" in the sense that Ngugi wa Thiong'o might advocate for, by decolonizing definitions of culture, aesthetics, and representational forms and techniques; and by fusing together, rather than keeping distinct, the many languages, idioms, forms and techniques, narratives and histories that comprise India's popular and regional cultures. Intercultural practice is at the heart of the decolonization process.... They write and perform plays with a decolonization theme. The Ramayana, Mahabharata, and the plays of Kalidas and Bhasa are all sources of inspiration. However, this is not done to support Hindu supremacy. (34-35)

There should be no debate about Karnad's importance as a pioneer in the decolonization of Indian English Drama. Without trying to imitate

Western theater at all costs, Karnad creates original stories, characters, and ideas for each play he writes. He also incorporates indigenous cultural sensibilities into his performances while using Western theater techniques. *Broken Images* and *Wedding Album*, for example, call for contemporary theatrical conventions such as a spinning stage and excellent acoustics, therefore he chooses a cutting-edge venue without hesitation. But it's a medium he only uses for certain tasks, and he never loses track of what he's supposed to do. He has revitalized and reenergized theatrical representations of Indian culture. Vanashree Tripathi has uncovered the postcolonial context that fostered Karnad's creative development.

Girish Karnad is representative of the complicated postcolonial intellectual temperament struggling to make sense of its cultural inheritance as it has been interpreted and reinterpreted throughout the centuries. Karnad's formidable knowledge devoted to building a modern Indian theater comes from his want to fulfill the dreams of countless generations at once and to provide a larger context in which to view art and culture. (7-8)

Karnad's "artistic revival of the ceremonial content of drama as ritual; he gives theatrical performance the dignity of a religious rite to counter its reputation as mere mimetic entertainment" (Tripathi 14) is his most significant contribution to the art form. His narrative matrix seems to borrow from Brecht's epic realism in order to represent the divergent cultural mores, while also using the spare beauty of classical theater in its economy of form and substance. Karnad's imagination is "thoroughly and originally Indian in every one of its blood cells" (Dhanavel 96), as he has boldly stated: "my three years in England had convinced me Western theatre had nothing to offer us" (Qtd. in Dhanavel 96). The playwright Karnad's goal in writing plays is to "catch the pulse of the socio-cultural-historical-political facets of India and Indian life," as put out by Rupalee Burke. History and myth have always fascinated Karnad, but he has always been interested in them for a reason. (106-107). To paraphrase what K. Chandrashekhhar has said, "The likes of Girish Karnad enable us to pretend that there is such a thing as a truly 'Indian'

theatre which can be true to its traditions and at the same time responsive to contemporary concerns" (xiv).

One of the Indian playwrights who has deviated from the traditional Western play format by looking to his own culture for inspiration is Girish Karnad. Karnad has sought a culturally appropriate and artistically fruitful approach to bringing theater into the brains of its viewers. He considered the possibility that folk theater's costumes and props may be repurposed for use in the modern world. (204).

Strong underlying components, techniques, character delineation, and choice of language that directly address colonial psychopathology and the supremacy of the West ensure literary and cultural independence. P. Obula Reddy made a crucial observation in this respect when he noted that modern plays by Indian playwrights like Karnad, Tanvir, Panikkar, and Karanth return to classical traditions. It's designed to be lived through and fought against, reworked into new dramatic forms that reflect modern Indian experience. They are responding to the reality of 'westernization' in India's past by attempting to reverse it. Decolonizing definitions of culture, aesthetics, and representational forms and techniques; fusing together, rather than keeping distinct, the many languages, idioms, forms and techniques, narratives and histories that make up India's popular and regional cultures are all part of an effort to "decolonize the mind" in the sense that Ngugi wa Thiong'o might advocate for. Decolonization relies heavily on intercultural work....Plays about decolonization are written and performed by the group. Inspiring works include the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, as well as the works of playwrights Kalidas and Bhasa. This, however, is not done to prop up some kind of Hindu hegemony. (34-35)

Karnad's role as a forerunner in the decolonization of Indian English Drama is undeniable. Karnad crafts plays with unique tales, characters, and ideas rather than slavishly imitating Western theater. He uses Western theatrical methods but also adds indigenous aesthetics and values into his performances. He readily opts for a cutting-edge location since productions like Broken Images

and Wedding Album need cutting-edge theatrical traditions like a rotating stage and great acoustics. But it's a medium he reserves for certain purposes, and he never gets off course. He has breathed new life into Indian cultural performances on stage. The postcolonial environment that encouraged Karnad's artistic growth has been revealed by Vanashree Tripathi.

Girish Karnad exemplifies the complex postcolonial intellectual temperament that seeks to understand its cultural legacy through the lens of many interpretations across many centuries. Karnad's desire to make the aspirations of many generations come true at once and to provide people a broader lens through which to appreciate art and culture motivated him to commit his considerable expertise to the construction of a contemporary Indian theater. (7-8)

Karnad's greatest contribution to theater is his "artistic revival of the ceremonial content of drama as ritual; he gives theatrical performance the dignity of a religious rite to counter its reputation as mere mimetic entertainment" (Tripathi 14). His narrative framework appears to draw inspiration from Brecht's epic realism in order to portray the many cultural norms, while also including the economy of form and content seen in classical theater. Karnad has openly claimed that "my three years in England had convinced me Western theatre had nothing to offer us" (Qtd. in Dhanavel 96), proving that his imagination is "thoroughly and originally Indian in every one of its blood cells" (Dhanavel 96). Aiming to, as Rupalee Burke puts it, "catch the pulse of the socio-cultural-historical-political facets of India and Indian life," dramatist Karnad writes plays with the intention of doing just that. Karnad has always had a deep interest in history and mythology, but his curiosity has never been without purpose. (106-107). Quoted from K. Chandrashekhar: "The likes of Girish Karnad enable us to pretend that there is such a thing as a truly 'Indian' theatre which can be true to its traditions and at the same time responsive to contemporary concerns" (xiv).

*The most intelligent person to ever accede to the throne of Delhi also ended his tenure in violence and political instability, making him one of the*

worst failures. The drama, in a way, represented the increasing disenchantment my generation felt with the new politics of independent India, with the ethical ideals that had led the independence struggle gradually eroding and the acceptance of cynicism and realpolitik taking their place. ("Author's Introduction" 7).

Karnad's Tughlaq is a masterpiece thanks to his skill as an artist and a playwright. It skillfully incorporates both reality and fiction elements. While the play's premise and many of its characters and events are based on real people and events, the author did develop a couple of minor characters—Aziz and Aazam—to be used in more comedic or surface-level situations. As a result, Karnad has infused the drama with a comical subplot. The events of Tughlaq are satirized in the tale of Aziz and Aazam. Tilak claims that the play lacks "catharsis in the true Aristotelian sense." As a result, the climax is muddled and Tughlaq is not killed off at the end; instead, he is left to "sleep confused and bewildered on his throne" (12). The announcer has traditionally been a choral figure who plays a drum and announces crucial information. The engaging tale, intricate storyline, and use of Arabic, Urdu, Hindi, and Kannada language, together with the use of contraries, symbols (the chess game, prayer, and a python), metaphors, idioms, and phrases, are all hallmarks of the play's original method.

Based on Yakshagana and other folk-styles, Hayavadana was created. Masks, curtains, mime songs, the commentator-narrator, dolls, the horse-man, the story-within-a-story, the world of human and the non-human, all come together skillfully to create a grotesque universe that fuses the norms of folk stories and elements of folk theatre. It's a world devoid of care for the wants and frustrations, happiness and sadness, with unfinished people and disinterested gods and talking toys and silent kids. Karnad uses the play's dramatic event to inspire poetry, music, and a spirit of merriment and celebration. The story is based on Somdeva's Brihadkathasaritasagar and Vetala Panchavimshati, which in turn were adapted by Thomas Mann for his novel Transposed Heads. Karnad's themes of existential predicament and idea of incompleteness emerge from these appropriations. The drama is divided into two

acts, with the first focusing on the main narrative involving Devadatta, Kapil, and Padmini and the second on the subplot with Hayavadana. The play's central theme, the frantic dance between incompleteness and the yearning for wholeness, is advanced by both narratives. A typical Yakshagana production would include Karnad bringing a mask of Lord Ganesha, the presiding god of traditional theater, onto the stage and performing pooja in his honor. Soon, Bhagavatta introduces the play's topic by having Ganesha have the head of an elephant and the body of a human, a symbol of incompleteness; he then proceeds to tell the narrative in a formalistic style reminiscent of a folk tale. According to Savita Goel, this method is flawless: "There is a superb technical achievement in the way in which Karnad uses Brechtian type of narrator figure in the role of Bhagavatta." He serves largely as an attention grabber for the theatergoers. With his insightful remarks, he is able to "step out of the play, talk to the audience, and explain the action" (211). Yakshagana is known for its extensive use of masks to emphasize the characters' individual traits. Devadatta wears a white mask and Kapila a black one when they first appear onstage at the start of the performance. When one of their heads is switched with another, their masks are also swapped out. Lord Ganesh is given an elephant-headed mask, while Kali is given a terrifying mask; Hayavadana first appears wearing a human mask and then a horse face. Curtains, whether they are half-curtains, painted curtains, or the type of curtain held by two stage workers in Yakshagana or Kathakali, are utilized to convey special significance. As Padmini performs Sati, the audience sees a curtain with a depiction of Kali and a raging fire, and the flames seem to jump upward as the curtain is raised, signifying the arrival of Hayavadana. There isn't a stage curtain or anything fancy like that. Dolls are another staple of popular theater, speaking both to Padmini's psychology and the audience's need for an emotional smorgasbord. Mime occurs while Devadatta, Kapila, and Padmini go to Ujjain in a bullock cart. While there is no actual wagon on stage, Kapila does so in imitation when Padmini and Devadatta come behind him. The cart's being driven by Kapila. The play's

depiction of Kali, with her elevated blood-red hands, evokes a realm of mystery and magic with a scary animated picture. When the curtain is pulled back, a frightful creature appears, her arms outstretched and her mouth gaping open with her tongue lolling out. These dramatic devices work well to address the play's themes while also entertaining the audience. The drum stops and when she lowers her arms and locks her mouth, it is obvious she has been yawning (31-32).

Broken Images, in contrast to Yakshagana and Natak Company, makes use of "New technology" (261) in the form of "the interior of a television studio." There was a huge plasma screen, many TVs, red lights, and a lapel mic. Massive bulbs, Mufflers, and Cameras...That Unmistakable Yellow Glow" (261-262). The Announcer, a contemporary incarnation of Sutradhara, comes on the giant plasma screen, introduces the play's only character, Manjula Nayak, and then vanishes; Manjula Nayak then speaks to the audience through television picture. Her speech is an introspective look at how she grew to be an English best-selling author and a wealthy celebrity. And "from now on, throughout the play, Manjul and her image react to each other exactly as if they were both live characters" (267), even after the address is finished and Manjula's image is still on the screen. Karnad has given the theater a fresh look into her psycho-biography, and the picture represents Manjula's inner self. At last, "every screen throughout the room begins blaring out loud messages, some in Kannada, some in English. The noise level is really high. The spinning stage is now in the pitch black outside. The sets turn off one by one until the studio is completely dark and deserted (284).

Directed by Lillete Dubey, Wedding Album had its world premiere on May 10, 2008, at the Tata Auditorium in Mumbai's National Centre for the Performing Arts. The play has a forward-backward movement strategy to build the story, with "Scenes One and Five take place about three years after the rest of the play" (5). The play is divided into nine scenes. The drama takes place almost entirely in four locations: Nandkarni's living room, Pratibha Khan's software production office, an internet café, and a restaurant. The play's central theme,

marriage, a time of joy and nervous anticipation, is given dramatic emphasis via the employment of cutting-edge technology and devices. The playwright, like G.B.Shaw, provides vivid descriptions of the action onstage. Another defining element is the presence of a story-within-a-story. Rohit and Praibha Khan are now hard at work on a videocassette narrative for the youth of the twenty-first century. The first scene opens with Vidula in close-up, addressing the camera head-on. She says, "I am Vidula," much as Manjula Nayak said in Broken Images, revealing her acute insecurity and awkwardness. Nadkarni Vidula. My true age is twenty-two and a half. I hold a Bachelor of Arts in Geography. I made it through all of my tests last year with flying colors. Right now, I'm just relaxing. I put in six months with a travel agency" (5th). Vidula's autobiography resembles a contemporary take on Suradhara. The conventions of Indian matrimony have been the target of much ridicule and humor. The play concludes with the stage becoming black, but not before frequent usage of camera, screen, SMS, Internet café, video chatting, laptop, mobile phones, etc., all of which are appropriate to the topic and the young cyber-generation.

Girish Karnad is responsible for the utilization of myths and stories with "imagination and creativity" in the form of stage-worthy dramas. Incorporating elements of myth and legend into a folk tale style allows him to achieve success where others have failed. His ability to unite the well-to-do and the common people has been his greatest asset" (Ramaswamy 278). As M.K. Naik so well puts it, "his technical experiment with an indigenous dramatic form...is a triumph which has opened up fresh lines of fruitful exploration for the Indian English Playwrights," (275) praising Karnad's impact on the field of theater. According to Khatri and Arora, Karnad's "extraordinary skill of using myth, history, and folktale to make the drama lively, thought provoking, and gripping" is the source of his uniqueness as a dramatist. The dramatic genius of Karnad "has provided oxygen for its life and energized it by Indianizing it for further maturation in an age of globalization when drama is gasping for air" ("Preface" v-vi). When asked what he thought would be Karnad's enduring legacy, he awkwardly said, "I perceive

a legacy of my generation. I'm glad that Dharamveer Bharati, Mohan Rakesh, Vijay Tendulkar, and I all came from the same period. With our combined efforts, we may say that we established a contemporary Indian national theater" (Kalidas and Merchant 2). A.K. Sinha compares and contrasts the theatrical methods of Karand and Brecht. Karnad, like Brecht, is interested in shattering the "illusion" of the theater, the state in which viewers lose track of time and their own identity when absorbed in a performance. So, much like Brecht, Karnad has narrators address the audience directly, makes synoptic announcements, and leaves the stage equipment on display. All of this forces the viewers to react to the play's plot not emotionally, but intellectually, by questioning and critiquing it. (55)

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In his work, Karnad seeks to investigate the potential of theatrical vision, shape, and language to express the awareness of India's people while being firmly anchored in the country's rich cultural history. Strong Indian-ness and gushing Indian imagination guide the synthesis of substance and form, which is both entertaining and aesthetically satisfying. His work decolonizes Indian English theater since it is consistent with "our rich cultural heritage" (Jain 82) and uses indigenous folk traditions. Karnad too seems to have doubts about this explanation. Karnad also seems to deal with bigotry and covert intentions. This play is an excellent example of the playwright's goal of "re inventing tradition," which can be summed up in a single phrase as an attempt to show traditional aspects without the accompanying superstition and violence. The annals of time bear testimony to the truth that no great play in the annals of any literature or, for that matter, in the annals of any civilisation, fails to educate both the present and the future. It's no surprise that today's literary critics, academics, and readers gush over the works of the authors of their own age. Only the genuine greatness of a literary work can be shown by its staying power across many generations. Karnad's plays will be viewed in great esteem by any critical or literary standard. Karnad's plays serve the same moral

goal as any other form of literature or art by merging reimagined traditional culture with a global viewpoint and current language.

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