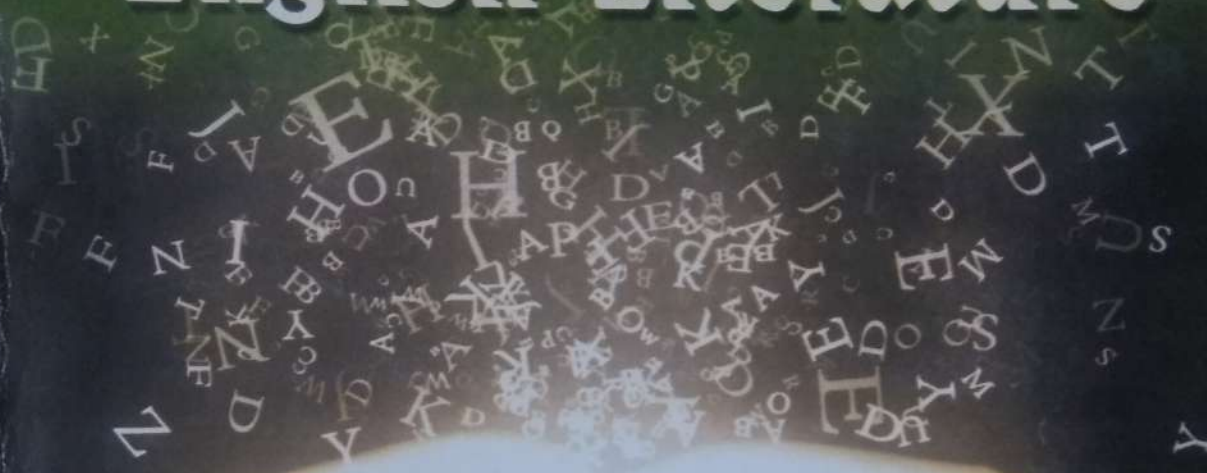


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Identity Crisis in GirishKarnad's Play Hayavadana

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GirishKarnad is one of the great dramatists of India with Vijay Tendulkar and he shares an exalted place in Indian Writing in English Drama. He is a versatile genius. He is a very good actor and has acted not only on the stage but also in numbers first rate movies. He also made frequently appearance on the small screen. He has also about six plays to his credit. They are Hayavadana, Angumalige, HittianaHunja, Naga-Mandala, Tale- Danda and Agni Mattu Male. These plays have been translated into major languages including the National and International languages. Hayavadana, Tughlaq and Naga-Mandala have been published by Oxford University Press in India. Karnad found translating the plays very enjoyable and rewarding. As a translator, he kept in mind the utterance value of the dialogue.

The present paper focuses on Devdatta, Kapila, Padmini and Hayavadana's identity crisis in the play Hayavadana. Hayavadana's story is a moving tale. It has two acts. Devdatta, Kapila, Padmini and Hayavadana are playing important roles in the play. The action begins in the city of Dharmapura ruled by one Dharmshila whose fame had reached far and wide. Two friends Devadatta and Kapila live in the city Dharmapura. They are known for their close friendship all over the city.

Devdatta is the only son of a wise Brahmin Vidyasagr. He is fair in colour and unrivalled in intelligence. The most learned priest could not stand before his wisdom. He was loved by all. He describes as a loser in the play, loses his wife to his dearest friend.

Devdatta is the apple of every eye in Dharmapura (1)(144)

Kapila is second of the two famed youth of Dharmapura. He is the only son of the ironsmith Lohita. He is dark and plain to look at, yet in deeds. He is the master of a strong body rippling muscles and described as rustic young man with little intelligence but has the innocence of a child. He is the bosom friend of Devadatta and his his opposite in all respects. Their friendship is a matter of discussion and example to set in the whole town. The world wonders at their friendship. The Bhagavata sings their praises as-
Two friends there were One mind, one heart (2)

Padmini, a young woman quick as lightning and of exceptional beauty steals Devadatta's heart. She comes as a dutiful wife to him but falls short of exceptions. In the play she is representative of independent dynamic and bold woman. She is torn between loyalty to her husband and love for Kapila. She compounds the mess that chance creates in her life in the temple episode for her failure to be reborn and wise after it. Padmini is described as Shyamanaika born of Kalidasa's magic. In one moment she becomes Devadatta's teacher, his muse and a source of inspiration in the poetry of love. She is a bold woman representing the modern outgoing women of our age. She is quick, modern and has an enthralling appearance.

Padmini becomes a victim of the indifference and apathy of goddess Kali. She creates identity crisis in her and complicates her problems. She prays to Kali to come to her rescue and the goddess does appear to help her. She says that Devadatta and Kapila lived together, loved and pardoned and killed each other and left her out. She meets the death on the funeral pyre of her husband and lover and dies on incomplete being.

The identity crisis had loomed up once before when Padmini in her excitement and fear messed up the heads. She puts Devdatta's head on Kapil's body and Kapil's head on Devdatta's body. After they come alive the pertinent question is who is a part of the stark reality. It is finally laid to rest by accepting the holy sages version who rules that the one with Devadatta's head is her husband. It is not a full satisfactory solution.

The play is able to put across the theme of Karma and fatalistic force. Devadatta's superior head is a watermark in intelligence; Kapila is strong in body and drive and daring. Both of them have begotten their strengths from their respective parents. It is a different matter that their inheritance becomes the cause of their doom. The same case happened with Hayavadana as well. He is born the peculiarity.

Hayavadana an abandoned child with a physical deformity has the face of a horse and body of a man. He is intelligent, conscious and helping. He suffers from dichotomy of mind and body. His character questions the fundamentals of the society. He is a product of an unequal marriage between a celestial being and an earthly woman. His mother is a princess of Karnataka who falls in love with a White Stallion at the time of her Swayambar. Hayavadana a product of their marriage with a mystic figure of the body of man and head of a horse became an abandoned child. His problems are many. First, he has a strange shape. Second, he does not have anybody to care for him. Third, he does not belong to any group existing on the earth. With these problems Hayavadana makes his appearance in the play.

The identity crisis in Hayavadana with horse's head and human body is also a problem. His mother, a princess falls in love with none other than a white horse and disregarding all she marries the stallion and lives with him happily for sixteen years. One fine morning in his place she finds a handsome celestial being who exhorts her to come with him to heaven. She refuses and gets a curse to be converted into a horse. She vanishes and run away to join the horse's family. Only Hayavadana the child of their marriage remains with that strange shape. She wanders around to get rid of his unnatural head. He meets number of sages, saints and visits temples, graves but in vain.

Bhagavata and the actors tried to pull out his head on the stage. He writhes in pain but allows them to do it in the hope that they might do something to help but that too goes in vain. Hayavadana does not know where does he belong to? He is

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unwelcomed everywhere. He can neither join the humans nor the animals. That is why he is sulking and hides himself from the gazes.

Here comes a rider

From what land O what land?

On his head a turban

Sleep now, sleep now

Why his chest

Red O red?

Why his eyes

Pebbles O pebbles?

Why his body

Cold O cold? (3)

Finally he does manage to attain a complete being but then in place of losing his head he loses the human body. Even his new acquisition the animal's body has something amiss in it and it is the human voice. Though with the passage of the play, he is able to surrender it for the neigh of the horse but the fact remains that he did remain under the trauma of identity crisis for a long time. The play presents the realm of incomplete individual, magnanimous gods, of vocal dolls and mute children, a world apathetic to the longings and frustration ecstasies and miseries of human being.

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