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The subordination of women in a patriarchal society

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Abstract:
If a woman wants to live happily in her in-law's house, she will have to make every effort to satisfy her mother-in-law and her husband. If she fails to give happiness to her mother-law-law, she can't get with her own life happily. Sudhir Kakar quoted M. N. Srinivas's comment on the main purpose of a girl's life, "The *summum bonum* of a girl's life is to please her parents-in-law and her husband. If she does not 'get on' with her mother-in-law, she will get a disgrace to her family, and cast a blot on the fair name of her mother". In Karnad's *Bali: The Sacrifice,* the Queen is unable to get on with her mother-in-law, the Mother-Queen for two reasons. First, she is a Jain and made her son a Jain to marry him; and secondly, she can't give her a grandson. In this way, the queen is unable to live happily and even the Queen commits suicide because her mother-in-law excited her son to commit a sacrifice of a dough-cock with his wife, being a Jain, she sacrifices her own life instead of a dough-cock.

Key Words: constitution, humiliated, instruction

Introduction

Indian society is patriarchal society. Woman in the society can't enjoy the equal rights to men. They are given all the rights even by constitution of India. In the words of Motilal Gupta in his book titled *Society in India*, "Women and men are given equal rights in constitution. Any type of partiality on the bases of gender is not accepted". But the reality is different. Women have to depend on men. Man is considered her master and she has to lead a life under the instruction of that master. If she commits a mistake, she is humiliated publically not his male partner. It is clear from the cases of Rani in Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* and Miss Benare in Tendulkar's *Silence! the Court is in Session*. Both the women are humiliated publically for their adultery but what about Appanna, Rani's husband who lives with a concubine and Prof. Damle who is responsible for Miss Benare's pregnancy. Nobody speaks even a single word against these men. Why society behaves differently with man and woman for the same crime?

Many type of marriage prevalent in India like- monogamy, polygamy. Monogamy also has different type like- one husband one wife; one husband with one wife also has many women as keep. Appana in Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* has one wife and one woman as keep. M. L. Gupta and D. D. Sharma has given reference of Bukenovik and writes about type of marriage in their book *Indian Society*, "Second type of monogamy is that in which a man marriage to a woman and has many women as his keep". K. M. Kapadia writes about polygamy in his book titled *Marriage and Family in India,* "Polygyny is

prevalent in India from Vedic age to present time" .The example of polygamy is the king Yayati in Karnad's *Yayati*. He has a queen Devayani who lives with him, another is the mother of Puru who is dead, and now he is going to marry Sharmistha, Devayani's maid. The marriage of Devayani and Yayati is an example of Gandharva Vivaha. Manu defines centaur marriage or Gandharva Vivah as, "It is to be recognized as a centaur marriage when the girl and her lover join with one another in sexual union because they want to, out of desire" .

Women are categorized in two groups as good woman and bad woman in the society. Lind L. Linsey defines them as, "The good woman embodied the feminine mystique. She remained virtuous throughout courtship". "The bad woman on the other hand, was the sexpot, who could entice a man away from his beautiful wife and loving family". The example of a bad woman is the concubine in Karnad's *Naga-Mandala*. She has taken away the husband of Rani. Swarnalata, Chitralekha in Karnad's *Yayati* represent the good women. The former accepts loneliness for the sake of her husband and the latter sacrifices her life because of she has left no hope in her life. Jyoti in Vijay Tendulkar's *Kanyadana* also represent a good woman in Indian context because for the sake of her relation to Arun, she accepts inhuman treatment given inflicted on her. Society expects from a woman to remain faithful and unite with her husband whether her husband is good or bad.

A person can't lead his/her life on the bases of past. He/she has to take the right decision for the future. Rani in Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* would have realised that her real husband who starts living with her after the cobra ordeal was not the father of her son. But on her part would not right if she rejects him. Prem Sagar rightly remarks in the *Preface* of the book Girish Karnad: *Naga-Mandala*, "It is no wisdom to remain stuck to the past, when future beckons us". If Rani rejects Appanna as not being the father of her son then what will her future be? She has to lead a lonely life and in Indian society it is not easy for a woman to bring up her child as a single mother. For the sake of her child and for herself, it is right to accept Appanna as the father of her son.

Both the dramatists serve their responsibility very well. It is expected from a dramatist to present the real picture of the society and not the total imagination. Here, both the dramatists present the real picture of the society through their plays. Vijay Tendulkar writes about the contemporary society and presents the complexity of the relations between man and woman and woman's place in the society. On the other hand, Girish Karnad has taken his story from myths but coloured it with contemporary appeal. He also presents that gender affects a person's life very much. Society has fixed the role for a person based on his/her gender and one who revolt against them has to suffer. Women have to suffer more than man for the same crime. The thing which is connected to the people affects the people very more. This is the main reason that the both dramatists got the name and fame.

Every human being wants completeness in his life. Sometimes a human being destroys his/her life in the quest of completeness. Padmini in Karnad's *Hayavadana* wants a complete man who is mentally as well as physically strong. Devadatta, her husband, is a well intelligent Brahmin and his friend, Kapila is physically strong man. Padmini is attracted by the physical built of Kapila. Kapila is also attracted by the beauty of Padmini when he first saw her. He describes her beauty to Devadatta in the following words,

"I hadn't thought anyone could be more beautiful than the wench Ragini who acts Rambha in our village troupe. But this one!- she is Yakshini, Shkuntala, Urvashi, Indumati- all rolled into one". She wants the wisdom of Devadatta and strength of Kapila. She even says aside about Kapila, "No woman could resist him". After the transformation of the heads of Devadatta and Kapila, Padmini chooses the man with Kapila's body and Devadatta's head as her husband. At this the man with Kapila's head and Devadatta's body says, "I know what you want, Padmini. Devadatta's clever head and Kapila's strong body…" . Then Devadatta retorts, "Suppose she did there is nothing in it. It's natural for a woman to feel attracted to a fine figure of a man". After getting a strong body, Devadatta finds the courage to accept it. But for Devadatta, to get this strong body is easy but to maintain it is very difficult. Padmini sees him changed gradually and finds herself again attracted towards Kapila. Bhagavata presents the words of Padmini's mind to Kapila, "If Devadatta had changed overnight and had gone back to his original form, I would have forgotten you completely. But that's not how it happened. He changed day by day. Inch by inch. Hair by hair. Like the trickling sand. Like the water filling the pot. And as I saw him change, I couldn't get rid of you" . It becomes difficult for Kapila and Devadatta to leave Padmini. Kapila even suggest Devadatta, "couldn't we all three live together- like the Pandavas and Draupadi". They found the death of each other as the only solution of this problem. After their death, Padmini takes the responsibility of their death, "You could only have lived ripping each other to pieces. I had to drive you to death. You forgave each other, but again left, me out" . After their death, she also commits Sati by saying the goddess Kali, "Other women can die praying that they should get the same husband in all the lives to come. You haven't left me even that little consolation" . If a person goes astray to fulfil his/her desire, he has to face a very critical situation at the end. Padmini in her desire of a complete man has to meet with death at the end.

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