



## “THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN IN PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY”: A STUDY OF GIRISH KARNARD’S NAGA-MANDALA

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### **ABSTRACT:**

*This research paper focuses on the status of women in Patriarchal society and how they are conquered by men in “Naga Mandala” by “Girish Karnad.” Women’s issues and how they struggle against it is always depicted in Indian English novels. Women are often portrayed as victims of patriarchy. Women play the role of daughters, sisters, wives and mothers. They also faced physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial control and harassment. Patriarchy is a social system where the majority of power and authority is given to men. In the play through the characters of Rani and Appanna we can understand the plight of women and gender rights in the earlier and present society. This play tells the story of a Hindu Woman named Rani who marries Appanna, one of the rich people in the village. “Naga-Mandala” powerfully portrays the pain and suffering of women in India in upper as well as lower strata of the society.*

**Keywords: Patriarchy, Feminism, Male Dominance, Myth, Racism.**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

India is the only country where women are equated with goddesses. Now a days women in India faces daily struggles against system of society. Women are not safe and secure in India. The purpose of this research paper is to reveal the trouble faced by the women in patriarchal society. Naga-mandala (1988) is Girish Karnard’s one of the finest play. It is two act play which was awarded him the *Karnataka Sahitya Academy Award* for the year 1989. Naga-mandala is a play with distinct character

like Cobra. Karnard says in his notes that this play is based on two oral Kannada tales he had heard from his mentor-friend, well known poet, translator and philologist A.K. Ramanujan to whom Karnard also dedicates the play. It was originally written in Kannada language then it was translated into English by Karnard himself. Naga-mandala directed by Vijaya Mehta in Germany was presented by Leipzier Schauspielhaus at Leipzig and Berlin for the festival of India in Germany in 1992. The play blends

history with mythical elements. Naga-mandala is a feminist play that not only attacks and exposes male racism and the discrimination doing by men in the patriarchal society. Karnad takes the technique of story within the story and the play attempts two things. 1) An interface between myth and history 2) feminist perspective. There are two plots presented in Naga-Mandala the framing plot of the male playwright and his curse is retelling story that A. K. Ramanujan calls a story and a song while the story of Rani is based on the serpent lover in Naga-mandala the sub plot involving Kuruduvva and her son kappanna who goes missing presents a fascinating gloss to runs story. Karnad exposes oppression of women and injustice done by men in patriarchal society. He creates within the play a strong association between oral narrative traditions and women's sub cultures existing within patriarchal societies. Girish Karnad brings to life of those subcultural impulses of women's tale and it often works opposition to male dominated society.

Naga-mandala is a feminist play that create many aspects of love, destiny, desire, purity, betrayal and other aspects of folk mythology. Naga-mandala tells the story of Rani. She was married to Appanna. She dreams of a calm and peaceful life with her husband but Appanna has no interest in Rani already he has a mistress and therefore he does not have any interest in Rani.

She will lock in her house. Rani was always depressed. She remembered her past life with her parents. Kurudavva, a blind women and friend of Aparna's late mother, comes to save her from her pain and evil thoughts. He was accompanied by his son Kappanna. Kurudavva gave Rani two roots. If Rani could give one of these roots to Appanna, she would fall in love with him. Kurudava said that Rani used large pieces of the root to make the curry. But the colour of the curry was blood red and Rani did not want to feed it to Appanna for fear of harming her. As the story itself tells, she was a kind-hearted and honest woman. She left him at the edge of the forest near their house. In this anthill lives a cobra, eats the curry and the inevitable happens. The cobra, eats the curry and the inevitable happens. The cobra starts entering Rani's house through the bathroom drain because he knows that Rani will not allow another man to come near her. Rani's thick hair symbolizes her feeling for cobra snake. Her story questions the morality of patriarchal system that requires women to be loyal to her husbands but men to be unfaithful to their wives. Rani faced many emotional and mental problems during her childhood. Rani's success in snake experiment is significant. In Indian English Literature Cobra (Naga) represent positive energy. Snake always help farmers. According to Zimmer:

Serpent Kings and queen (Naga, Nagin)

Personifying and directing the terrestrial

Waters of the lake and ponds, rivers and

Oceans, the goddess of the three sacred. (p.59)

In the Ramayana, Sita is tried by fire for her chastity and righteousness. Girish Karnard's genius here is to capture the movement when women give birth as a direct realization of patriarchal ideology. In literature, the word "Patriarchy" means "the rule of the father or Patriarch" and it is used to describe a type of male-dominated family. "In patriarchy, a women's life is defined by ideas and notions created by men, which strips her identity." Rani is protagonist of the play. She is a typical Indian girl. She believes in all the values invented by Patriarchal society set up. Sylvia Walby Points out in "Theorizing Patriarch, "that, it is "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit Women." Naga-Mandala deals the status and position of women in society. It is also used as a tool to expose the selfishness and hypocrisy of patriarchy.

Girish Karnard's play Naga-Mandala exposure of women's experiences and self-expression. It appeals to the post-modern sensibility of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Naga-Mandala is a good example.

*She looks so simple, so helpless, and she carries so many things inside her. "I wonder how she manages."*

This quote offers insights into the character of Rani in the play. Initially described as a submissive, oppressed woman, she later transforms into a strong, independent woman. Her journey represents a transformation from fragility to strength, highlight the complexity of her character. The woman's story expresses the female point of view about her needs, problems and experiences within the patriarchal society. It provides an understanding into the complex nature of human relations while also showing women's way of adjusting into their difficult social roles. Mahasweta Devi and Mulk Raj Anand highlight the unsaid realities of women's suffering as well as their ability to endure and fight against oppressions. The play is the open media to the today's people and helps to understand cultural context of the Indian woman of today who seeks to fulfil her needs and aspirations.

Karnad uses animal imagery to highlight plight of women like bird staring into the eyes of snake, the dog barking at the sight of snake etc. Human and animal world is coming led as the cobra falls in love with Rani and takes form of her husband to meet her. Rani's all unfulfilled longings are satisfied by him. This play and important role to shows troubles and sufferings of women

with the use of animal imaginary. Rani gives birth to his child. But ultimately their union is not possible as the thin boundary line comes between. In all, the play is a marvellous story of Rani who ultimately becomes victorious with the invisible love and support of cobra. It also shows rich Indian myths with feminine point of view.

**CONCLUSION:**

A Women has become the centre of discussion in the post-colonial literature. The lives of women have been manipulated by the Patriarchy in all ages and cultures. In Modern atmosphere, Men and Women have to work together to maintain pace of progress. Women have to show that they drive to and enterprise as much as men have. Today Girish Karnard is the most significant Indian dramatists. He as a dramatist of Post-Modern age fascinates with various aspects. As a male feminist he has portrayed the feminist issues like child marriage, loveless marriage, and exploitation of wife in his novels. To address the plight of women in society, key solutions the government needs to continue to implement policies that promote women's health, education, and economic empowerment. There needs to be a greater focus on gender sensitization and education at all levels of society.

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