

**A FOUCAULDIAN ANALYSIS: A STUDY OF FEMALE
CHARACTERS IN THE SELECT PLAYS OF GIRISH
KARNAD**

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**In
ENGLISH**

**By
Manju Joshi
41500156**

**Supervised By
Dr. Vani Khurana**



LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY

PUNJAB

2020

Declaration

I do hereby acknowledge that:

- i) The thesis entitled “**A Foucauldian Analysis: A Study of the Female Characters in the Select Plays of Girish Karnad**” is a presentation of my original research work done under the guidance of my thesis supervisor Dr. Vani Khurana. Wherever the contribution of others is involved, every effort is made to indicate it clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.
- ii) I hereby confirm that the thesis is free from any plagiarized material and does not infringe any rights of others. I also confirm that if any third- party owned material is included in my thesis, which required permission from the copyright owners, I have obtained all such permissions from respective copyright owners.
- iii) I carefully checked the final version of printed and softcopy of the thesis for the completeness and for the incorporation of all suggestions of the Doctoral Committee.
- iv) I hereby submit the final version of the printed copy of my thesis as per the guidelines and the exact same content in CD as a separate PDF file to be uploaded in Shodhganga.



Date: 14/09/2020

Signature of Candidate



Certificate by Advisor

I hereby affirm as under that:

- i) The thesis presented by Manju Joshi (41500156) entitled “**A Foucauldian Analysis of the Female Characters in the Select Plays of Girish Karnad**” submitted to the Department of English, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara is worthy of consideration for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
- ii) She has pursued the prescribed course of research.
- iii) The work is the original contribution of the candidate.
- iv) The candidate has incorporated all the suggestion made by the Department Doctoral Board of the university during her end term presentation and pre-submission seminar held on dated ---.

Place: Phagwara

Advisor

Dated:

Dr. Vani Khurana

Associate Professor

Department of English

School of Social Sciences and Languages

Lovely Professional University

Phagwara- 144411(Punjab)

Acknowledgment

My first indebtedness is to the Almighty God, without whose blessings it is impossible to accomplish anything in life. I thank my Guruji, for showing me the path of hard work, dedication and honesty towards my goal.

I must extend my heartfelt gratitude to my Parents for their untiring moral support. My father, who never hesitated to visit the university as I could not so many times due to my job limitations. My father, Sh. I. J. Joshi inspired me not only for pursuing Ph.D. but also for inspecting from time to time whether I am going consistent with my work or not. I must also extend my gratitude to my grandfather, Sh. R.M. Joshi, for paying my fee all these years for the Ph. D program. I also thank my younger son, Kaartikeya, for being so patient throughout these years.

I extend my sincere gratitude to my advisor Dr. Vani Khurana. I could not have taken a single step ahead without my advisor's hard work and right guidance. After Dr. Jayatee Bhattacharya's able guidance, Dr. Vani Khurana made it possible for me to accomplish the work step by step. I appreciate Dr. Khurana's efforts towards leading my work towards betterment and completion. Thank you for guiding me in your own peculiar way which by now I admire from my heart. Thank you also for having faith in me.

Besides my advisor, I owe my gratitude to the distinguished panel from time to time. Dr. Pavitar Parkash Singh (HoS- School of Social Sciences & Languages), Dr. Ajoy Batta (Professor and Head of Department of English), Dr. Jayatee Bhattacharya, Dr. Digvijay Pandya, Dr. Nipun Chowdhary and Dr. Sanjay Prasad

Panday, for sharing their thoughtful inputs. I could not have accomplished this work without their positive criticism and critical bent of mind. The panel members had been very patient and forgiving for me. I bend my head in front of them for polishing my research skills and also for showing me the path to perseverance and patience.

I am grateful to my younger brother Adv. Rajiv Joshi not only for encouragement and moral support but also for editing a part of my work. He took out his time from his busy schedule from time to time.

(Manju Joshi)

Preface

The idea of the subject matter of the present research has germinated from the seeds of an inquisitive mind and an impelling desire to fathom the status of women in our society. Drama, as a powerful tool of social change, has been deftly handled by Girish Karnad, who not only, enthused, his life and breath to this genre but also transformed it into a powerful medium of repression in cultural context that questioned the age- old value system of our society.

Michel Foucault's precepts have facilitated immensely the study pertaining to the workings of power by analyzing identity, discourse, discipline, resistance in the context of female characters in the selected plays of Girish Karnad. The Foucauldian analysis is an effective literary tool to enable the highlighting of discrepancies with respect to emancipation, gender- politics, objectification of women, a lack of dignity for women in our society. The thesis travels from social transformation to the establishment of freedom- the basic human right and that is exactly, the ultimate goal of this thesis.

Table of Contents

S.NO	TITLE	PAGE NO
1)	Title	i
2)	Declaration	ii
3)	Certificate by Advisor	iii
4)	Acknowledgement	iv-v
5)	Preface	vi
6)	Table of Contents	vii
7)	Brief Candle	1-45
8)	Chapter 1- The Problematisation of Identity: Disempowered Karnadian Female Characters	46-93
9)	Chapter 2- Objectification through Discourse: The Silenced “Other”	94-136
10)	Chapter 3- Objectification through Discipline: Female Characters and Surveillance	137-179
11)	Chapter 4-Exploring Identity: An Interstitial View of Ethics, Self and Resistance	180-214
12)	Conclusion	215- 226
13)	Bibliography	227-242

Chapter- 1

Brief Candle

Michel Foucault was a French social theorist, philosopher, historian and public intellectual. His ideas have inspired the analysis of various works across the globe. The term “Foucauldian” is applied to any such analysis that takes into its account the precepts of Foucault and the works are discussed in the light of these precepts. The central theme of most of Foucault’s works were the methods with which modern civilisation creates and controls human subjects through varied institutions. The study would fall under the term ‘Cultural Studies’ which is an innovative and interdisciplinary field of research and teaching that allows one to investigate the way in which culture creates and transforms individual experiences, everyday life, social relations and relations of power. The analysis is both qualitative as well as quantitative. A qualitative research analyses the meaning of content within texts that aims to delve deep into a problem. A quantitative research aims to quantify opinions, attitudes and behaviours and to generalize the same. Cultural studies cater to the real world and the social conditions that shape the production of texts and culture. The study is not confined to one narrow corner of literature or culture. It brings into its gamut the real conditions of the everyday lived experiences of human beings. A text is not written in a vacuum. Every text is a product of its culture and immediate social conditions. Cultural studies enable to analyse a work, by including what seems useful at a moment. It finds engagement with real life issues like identity, gender, race, class, etc. The central theme of most of Foucault’s works was the methods with

which modern civilisation creates and controls human subjects, through varied institutions. “...to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects” (Foucault, *Essential*126). Foucault stated that he aimed at creating “... a history of the different modes...” (Foucault *Essential* 126) that accounted for the creation of human beings into subjects. For this, he chose three modes of objectification that led to the formation of a subject from that of a human being. The first mode of objectification was that of inquiry that were labelled as ‘sciences’ and where there was objectivising of the productive subject. In his second part, he studied the ‘objectivizing’ of the subject that he termed as the “dividing practices” (Foucault, *Essential* 126). Foucault wrote, “The subject is either divided inside him- self or divided from others. This process objectivises him” (Foucault, *Essential* 126). The third mode is the way a human being turns him- or herself into a subject (Foucault, *Essential* 126). The thesis takes up the second mode in what he termed as “dividing practices” to analyze and enumerate the objectification of the female characters in the select plays of Girish Karnad. This process objectivises him”(Foucault, *Essential* 126). The objectification of the female body, as a part of the techniques of a domination in a cultural set- up is taken up in the thesis. The thesis will take up those works of Michel Foucault in their English translation, the contents of which will help in the analysis of the female characters in the select plays under consideration.

The concept of subject forms the kernel of his work. Foucault writes, “... the goal of my work during the last twenty years has not been to analyse the phenomenon of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis. My

objective, instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects” (Foucault, *Essential* 126). Michel Foucault is here referring to the formation of subject and his interest in such formations. The formation of the subject takes place through the three modes of objectification, out of which, the thesis takes up the second mode. It is the “dividing practices” wherein human beings are turned into objects through the techniques of domination. The dividing practices are a way to control through power. The very idea of division is a reflection of power. Division is thought of and brought about by power. The subject which is divided from others is bound to undergo a division inside his own self as a result of the pressures exerted by the dominating authorities. Foucault terms such human beings as the “objectified subjects” (Foucault, *Essential* 126). Foucault takes up the instance of the binary opposites of the normal and the abnormal in a society. The very mention of the word abnormal represents, power. Foucault’s gives example of the division of the sick from that of the healthy. Taking clue from this premise I consider the binary division of male and female that through the “dividing practices” render the objectification of female in a cultural set- up. The word objectification itself is a term derived from the effects of power. A consideration of male into normal and the female into abnormal comes natural as a part of any social set – up, especially in the one where emancipation is still a distant dream and women still form a part of the marginalised group as a result of their exclusion through the dividing practices. The objectification of women is due to this very division. The thesis will confine its study to the objectification through the second mode, as the argument will be drawn from the study of the female body as caught up in the meshes of a cultural set up. The limitation of a body defined by the culture it inhabits

is a result of the workings of power on that body. Foucault was not in favour of stark principles that landed one in darkness. The operations of power, in a society form the background of his ideas. He worked towards establishing certain ideas about human beings as drawn from the instances in the history of mankind and relating those ideas to the lived experiences in a society. Foucault states, "... that the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the workings of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them (Rabinow, Introduction, *Reader* 6)". The institutions camouflage power, and the subjugation is affected through this very power. The individual lives are ill- affected by the workings of relations of power. It is to be argued, that subjection is accomplished through the agency of power. Foucault maintains about the one who is subjected "... he is equally placed in power relations that are very complex" (Foucault, *Essential* 127). The ones, who are more powerful, are able to subjugate. Foucault's works do reflect power as a part of the daily lived experience. Power, then, becomes the means of subjection. Foucault does not confine power as concentrated in a particular institution or the state. He wrote, "Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault, *History 1*: 93). Power is said to be enacted and contested within a society amongst all relations. He maintains that power operates beyond the realm of institutions. Power can equally be seen to hold between an individual and an institution. Individual is seen as the "place", where power is enacted and the 'place' where it is resisted. Power is explained by Foucault as, "Power is understood in the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and

which constitute their own organisation” (Foucault, *History*1: 92). So power is exercised from innumerable points. Power- relations get established where there are imbalances and inequalities. Foucault saw relations of power as a strategy which was found dispersed in the society in a minute network. Power, in this sense, ceases to be just the imposition of the will of those in authority over those, not in authority. Power disseminates itself, through the medium of knowledge and discourse.

Foucault is interested in the ways that the “subjectification” of the body takes place. Foucault stated two meanings of the word subject. First is, “Subject to someone else by control and dependence, and the second one, when one is tied to his own identity by a conscience or self- knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power, which subjugates and makes subject to” (Rabinow, Introduction, *Reader* 21). Subjectification means to bring someone under one’s control to obey. Dividing practices are the techniques of dominating the marginalised through their exclusion. The dividing practices results in exclusion and hence, objectification. The plays under study will be examined in the way power is enacted and resisted on the body, body being the focus of the study. Relations of power support the subjugation of an individual. The marginalisation of the female characters is reflected in the contents of the plays under study. The marginalisation as reflected in the contents of the plays under study, resonate with the contemporary conditions prevailing in our society. The female characters, in the plays under study represent women as being under the system of patriarchal rules where they have to obey the dictates of patriarchy. Patriarchy is a cultural construct in which the dictates of the male authority are the rules for the subjugated females. The division of the male and the female into the

normal and the abnormal accounts for the subjugation brought about as a result of the workings of power. In the plays under consideration, female characters are the ones who have been marked out as transgressors, owing to their deviance from the general norms of the social set up that they are a part of. The abnormal females have to live their lives in accordance with the norms placed by those in authority. This unacceptability of the women in our social set- up and their consequent subjugation is traced in the thesis. The work intends to study how these female characters cut through the webs of social norms that try to hold them enslaved in relations of power. The norms are a result of those very intricate relations of power. Power relations are rooted deep in a social nexus. The female characters in the plays under study, can be seen as ‘bodies’ which form the focus of a number of institutional and discursive forces like marriage, family and society. As understood from Foucauldian precepts, power works its way through the institutions. Marriage, society and family are not only the institutions of power but also the agents through which power is distributed and brought about in a cultural set- up. According to Kate Millett, “Patriarchy’s chief institution is the family” (Millett 33). It is within the family that a female is relegated to the periphery and her body is the site through which the discursive practices of exclusion are carried out. Millett talks about the women in patriarchal set- up as the ‘marginal citizens’ and assigns the word ‘minority’ to them owing to their status (55). How the individual’s body is used and subjected in power relations to attain political control of it can be explained by the following words, “But the body is also directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform

ceremonies, to emit signs” (Foucault, *Discipline* 25). The word power and politics are both related to each other. The question of a woman’s body as a matter of political manoeuvring is a result of the workings of power. Foucault asserts the need of an analysis of an institution from the standpoint of power relations. He writes that “the other” (the one over whom power is exercised) is recognised and maintained to the very end as a subject who acts” (Foucault, *Essential* 138). Judith Butler in *The Psychic Life of Power* rightly explains the dilemma of the subject:

“Bound to seek recognition of its own existence in categories, terms and names that are not of its own making, the subject seeks the sign of its own existence outside itself, in a discourse that is at once dominant and indifferent. Social categories signify subordination and existence at once. In other words, within subjection the price of existence is subordination” (Butler 20).

The identity formation of the subject takes place by the outside authority. It is an identity imposed on an individual’s self. The designation and the treatment meted out as a mere ‘object’ is the cause of age-old existential dilemma of a woman’s ill-treatment at the hands of the dominating patriarchal culture. A woman recognises her existence by that of the male. Even the fact and conditions of her existence are determined by the outside authority. The formation of the identity of the subject by the outside authority takes place by the impressions and directives of that dominant external force. The existence of a subject and its identity is reflected by the category that one is put into. The subject has no say in the formation of its own identity. The subject can exist only at the cost of accepting the subjugation that is meted out to it.

Thus, the analysis of power- relations forms a significant aspect of the “dividing practices” (Foucault, *Essential* 126) of which women do form a considerable part in the form of their subjugation, exclusion and the consequent objectification.

The term “power” designates relationships between “partners” (Foucault, *Essential* 135). Power as understood is applied in terms of the “immediate struggles” (Foucault, *Essential* 129) that categorizes the life of an individual. It is these nearest struggles that question the status of an individual. From Foucault’s categorisation of the three forms of the struggles, struggle against forms of domination will help in discussing relations of power. Foucault contends that these struggles of domination have not yet disappeared. Foucault considers the struggles of domination as instrument of subjection. The concept of the relations of power as put forward by Foucault is not only based upon its effects but also its causes, in order to seek an analysis of the same. The object of analysis is the power relations. According to Foucault, the exercise of power is “... a way in which some act on others” (Foucault, *Essential* 129). Since Foucault, disregards the role of consent in the relations of power, he therefore, questions the form of power relations as affected by violence. The relations of power are described by him as “... a mode of action that does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions” (Foucault *Essential* 137). And violence is explained by him as that which “... acts upon a body or upon things it forces, it bends, it breaks, it destroys, or it closes off all possibilities” (Foucault, *Essential* 137).

Relations of power also establish the fact of procuring certain objectives by those who act upon the actions of others. Relations of power are established either by

threat or the power of speech, through economic disparities, complex system of control, surveillance, archives or rules that might be fixed or changeable. Power relations also establish the fact of institutionalisation that takes up the shape of an “apparatus” (Foucault, *Power* 195) elucidating its regulations and establishing itself as a hierarchical structure functioning as an autonomous unit. It is what he terms as bio- power in which human body is manipulated and controlled (Rabinow, Introduction, *Reader* 17). Foucault refers to the strategy employed as a means to an end. He talks about strategy as a way to one’s advantage to achieve the desired results. Matters of strategic technique reduce the subject from indulging in any kind of struggle. Foucault mentions domination as the basic ingredient in the structure of power relations. The thesis looks at the unhealthy and uncalled for results of such domination that penetrate to the depths of a society. This again becomes a strategic situation in which the conflict and the sharp split between the adversaries in the relations of power are visible. The relations of power constitute a central phenomenon in the societies marked by domination and relations of strategy, and the resulting resistances and revolts.

Power is interpreted in terms of discipline. According to Foucault, “Discipline may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power a modality for its exercise comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a ‘physics’ or an ‘anatomy’ of power, a technology” (Foucault, *Discipline* 215). Discipline is a powerful weapon to bring the desired effects and it is nothing else but power. Discipline as enumerated by Foucault is the agency through which a body is controlled by subjection. Such a body is termed as a “docile” body. A docile body is subjected and used. A docile

body is imprinted with the effects of power. Discipline shapes up through punishment and prohibitions. The one, who is powerful, is in a position to subjugate. Discipline affects the body as well as the soul. Punishment, as such, seeps through the soul. So, it is terse to say that power dictates, dominates and controls not only the body but also the soul.

It is the nature of power that it operates from everywhere and at all levels. It is what Foucault terms as the 'microphysics' (Foucault, *Reader* 174) of power. It is the distribution of power what Foucauldian analysis caters to. Power is never exercised without certain aims and objectives. "Power as a pure limit set on freedom is, at least in our society, the general form of acceptability" (Foucault, *History*1: 86). So, in this sense, power delimits and defines the conduct of an individual in a society. Foucault writes that there is no escape from the clutches of power. Power acts by laying down rules and these rules are maintained through the language or what can better be termed as discourse. The rules in most cases are unwritten norms and because of the stronghold of power, those norms are almost impossible to be ignored by an individual. Power projects its rules. In addition to prohibition, power brings the threat of punishment. The one who is subjected and turned into an object is made to choose the suppression or punishment. Punishment was a threat to the body of the offender. There is no escape from power. The source of power is traced by Foucault as suggested in the chapter, "The Subject and Power" (Foucault, *Essential* 126-44), that power comes from deep within society. It is not possible to conceive a society without power relations.

Foucault avers that power is accompanied by resistance. Infact, resistance is an evidence of the workings of the relations of power. It is rather "inside" power.

(Foucault, *History1*: 95). In the concerned plays, “transgression” is one such form of resistance in the plays under study. Foucault, also talks about the multiplicity of resistances in the network of power. He categorised resistance as “possible, necessary, improbable, spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant or violent” (Foucault, *History1*: 95). Resistances can be in varied forms of a compromise or a sacrifice also. Resistances are irregular. Foucault calls them as “irreducible opposites” (Foucault, *History1*: 96) to power. It may be termed as a rebellion also. Resistances may vary in extent and density. Resistances bring ruptures, divisions and re- divisions in a society.

According to Foucault, the relationship between a body and a social institution is of political nature. The subject constituted therein is objectified as a victim and this victim remains marginalised throughout. The objectified body is brought under the domination after being socially compartmentalised. An objectified body is the one which after exclusion is taken for granted to be treated the way one wishes to. Human beings are given a social and personal identity. The one who is subjected can be categorised as passive and active by Foucault. Paul Rabinow in his introduction to *The Foucault Reader* quotes Foucault, that the process in which a subject is self- formed takes place through a variety of “operations on [people’s] own bodies, on their own souls, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct” (Rabinow, Introduction, *Reader11*). The person who is confined in a certain space is in a passive position. There are those who are involved in active self- formation. This self-formation leads to a self -understanding and for this they are brought about by an external authority as in the case of a confessor. So, to say, “dividing practices” are

modes of manipulative tactics that includes practice of exclusion in a given social space.

Power asserts itself through the medium of language and what Foucault termed as 'Discourse'. It refers to the way a language works in a social milieu to establish relations of power. It reveals identities and the power- relations hidden therein. Language is a mirror that unleashes how power- relations are constructed and played upon in any society. Language categorizes personal and institutional identities and the resulting politics in any given relationship. Discourse constructs through knowledge by specifying the principles of inclusion and exclusion. Discourse produces power as well as knowledge. The dominant possessing knowledge is equipped with power. Discourse frames a subject by defining the boundaries for the identities that shape up or lose their existence. It is through discourse that power circulates in society. While specifying the boundaries set for identities, discourse maintains certain kinds of thinking or arguments to be taken as truths while other ways of thinking get stamped as falsity and thus, excluded. Foucault refers to discourse as ways of constituting knowledge together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations. Knowledge is constructed, organised, shared and used through particular forms of speech, writing and language- or what is called discourse. Discourse cannot be dissociated from knowledge and understanding. According to Foucault, discourse conditions people's lives and inform their thinking. He focussed on power as central to human conditions. Foucault argued that human relations, science, institutions are all caught up in a struggle for power and discourse is the terrain through which this struggle is carried out. The person who controls the

discourse also controls the subjects in those discourses. The inequalities in the power- relations show up through discourse.

Foucault's ideas can be used to study the objectification of the female body in the institution of marriage and family through the agencies of power, discipline, resistance and discourse. The "dividing practices", through the exclusionary process leads to the objectification and the resulting victimisation of the excluded viz. "the other" (Foucault, *Essential* 138). The female characters in the plays under consideration, serve as the discursive sites where the existing power relations lead to their subjugation and hence, victimisation.

The first five plays under study in English translation are mythical or based on the folktales but are very much relevant to the contemporary times. These are *Yayati*, *Nagamandala*, *Hayavadana*, *The Fire and the Rain* and *Bali: The Sacrifice*. The sixth play in English, *Wedding Album* represents the contemporary society. The first five plays soaked in myth or folk-lore would serve as a ground for analysing the need for emancipation for women, held captive by the workings of gender politics, resulting in their objectification even in the contemporary society and the sixth play analyses the same with respect to this representation in the modern world. The plays under study will take into account the values, judgements, specific encounter between characters, and the reasons and opinions pertaining to the characters. The quantitative study regarding the plays will assure the descriptive analysis of the plays that will assist in making generalised observations pertaining to a larger population.

Foucault's interest in the subject and the objectification of the human subject can be seen through the strategic workings of power that leads to the considerations

of the workings of identity, discourse, discipline and resistance. “Dividing practices” (Foucault, *Essential* 126) is that mode of objectification where a category of individuals is isolated from the rest. “... the subject is objectified by a process of division either within himself or from others” (Foucault, *Essential* 126). Such “dividing practices” have been explored in the works of a writer whose works which are garbed in the traditional myths and also serve as a powerful reflection of the contemporary social set-up.

Girish Raghunath Karnad, recipient of Jnanpith award and the prestigious, Sahitya academy award, holds a mirror to the very evolution of Indian theatre. Girish Karnad was a prolific writer who blended his plays with traditional and modern aspects giving a new definition to the Indian theatre nourishing it with a new life. An actor, and a director, Karnad’s plays have an international appeal. Karnad wrote his plays in Kannada and all of those plays have been translated into English. The traditional and the modern, voice the two realities in India and Karnad’s plays reverberate with the essence of Indian society. Karnad follows the Brechtian principles of interpreting the world and changing the same by inculcating it in the plays. The female characters, in the plays of Girish Karnad, carry the imprints of a universal appeal. The writer sketches the female characters as representative of the group of individuals who are at once compartmentalized as well as controlled by the discursive apparatuses surrounding them. Apparatus is the term used by Foucault to describe the institutional or administrative structures that exercise power in a social set-up.

What I'm trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions- in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of the relations that can be established between these elements. (Foucault, *Power*194).

Girish Karnad, the foremost national playwright has drawn heavily from myths, legends, folk tales and history. Myth, folk lore and history turned anew with the playwright's deft handling. Karnad's earlier plays are replete with the smell of rustic soil due to his childhood memories of the 'Yaksagana' (Vatsyayan 32) plays that the author used to visit with his servants. Yakshagana, was primarily concerned with Kannada literature. 'Yakshagana Bayalata' (Vatsyayan 41) in the form of musical composition and open-air drama is prevalent in the modern times. Myth plays a powerful role in our cultural and religious set up of society. A myth is a traditional story concerned with the early history of people explaining a natural phenomenon and involving supernatural beings or events. Our culture is grounded in myths which are held in high esteem in our society. Our people have always found inspiration from the mythological stories and the characters in the mythical stories have indeed served as role models for the people. The social fabric of society has been re-enforced with beliefs or myths. An analysis of an individual cannot be done in isolation from the cultural roots that one is a part of. The significance of women in any society forms an integral part of that society. It must be admitted at the same time that women have been denied a pure integration into the social set up. One does

not fail to find the undertones of contemporary concerns in Karnad's plays. The representation of female characters calls for an analysis with respect to the contemporary times in the plays under study. Karnad's portrayal of women characters has been very unconventional. The playwright puts before us the female characters that transgress their paths as a reaction to the social suppression sourced by taboos. The thesis aims to dissect and analyse the reasons for transgression as a consequence of the rigidity in the operations of power. Aparna Dharwadker, in her book, *Theatres of Independence: Drama, Theory and Urban Performance in India since 1947*, asserts in the introduction "Karnad employs traditional Indian narrative materials and modes of performance successfully to create a radically modern urban theatre" (Dharwadker, Introduction, *Theatres* vii). Dharwadker in her book, *Theatres of Independence: Drama, Theory and Urban Performance in India since 1947*, regarded the "postcolonial" plays as moving away from the theme of colonialism. She considers the "postcolonial" drama leaning towards home and family. According to her, the "folk" element inculcated the issues concerning gender and patriarchy (12). So is the case, with the plays of Girish Karnad. Swastika Muduli in her paper "Gender Bias Verses Power of Sexuality" (2015) discusses the role of men and women in a social set up. The paper analyses Rani, in *Nagamandala*, caught up in the conundrum of emotions in a patriarchal set-up. Dharwadker further says, "No doubt, the works of the authors remain connected to both the modern and the postmodern western practices especially to specific forms of socio-realistic, existentialist, absurdist and Brechtian political theatre" (Dharwadker 11). Deepa Kumawat and Iris Ramnani in their paper "Impact of Brechtian Theory on Girish Karnad: An Analysis

of *Hayavadana* and *Yayati*” (2013) analysed the Brechtian concepts of the plays that moved back to the epic theatre. Karnad adopted the epic theatre in his history plays to attain the alienation effects. They write, that the plays are modernised seeking the theme of identity crisis as in *Hayavadana*. Epic theatre aims at detachment of the audience while watching a performance. The plays aim at titillating the intellectual capacities of the audience or the readers that deal with the problems or issues of immediate social interests. The female characters in the plays under study are the discursive constructs, who are not only isolated from others but also are the ones who are unaware of their very fact to be an individual in their own right. The female characters are caught up in the webs of power- relations. Karnad’s plays showcase the “oppressed” and the “weak”. The exclusion of the female in a male dominated society and “her” consequent transgression as an expression of fulfilment of her desire as well as resistance runs through the course of the action in the plays. The plays tend to set a reminder that woman do form an important aspect of a social construct. The reader can easily discern the female characters being pushed to the periphery and do not fail to identify similar situations existing for a woman in our contemporary society. Nancy Harstock in her chapter, “Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women”, contends that only few women benefit from emancipation (Nicholson, *Feminism* 157- 75). The thesis foregrounds this contention that emancipation has not reached the depths of our society and the women are, till date, subject to objectification and consequent victimisation in body and soul.

The female characters find themselves living in a state of self- denial and losing a sense of self in the act of submission and subjugation till they come out of

their dependency and transgress the path chosen for them by the ones who dominate them. Sheila Rowbotham describes women as identifiable with nature and that is why she affirms that a woman's education is meant to train her to serve men (Rowbotham 38). Everything in their lives derives its meaning when they follow the path set for them by social forces that bind them. To quote Foucault regarding the kind of woman considered ideal, "She inhabited the outer edge of the "world" in which she always had to appear as a value and of the family, where she was assigned a new destiny charged with conjugal and parental obligations" (Foucault, *History1*: 121). Women who fail to follow the prescribed path undergo a tragic end. Such women are debarred from being a part of society. Karnad's female characters, fail to follow the prescribed path. Swastika Muduli in her paper "Gender Versus Power of Sexuality" discusses the question of justification of chastity in the play *Nagamandala* (2015).

The "objectification" of the body into a victim surrounded by the agencies of power, discourse, discipline, knowledge and resistance forms the focus of this research, which will be analyzed through the actions, intentions, expressions and the ambiguous identities of these characters. Objectification is understood with respect to the concept of "dividing practices" (Foucault, *Essential1*26) used by Michel Foucault that means the tactics of domination where exclusion results in reducing individuals into mere objects and held in subjugation. Simone De Beauvoir in her introduction to *The Second Sex* states, "They propose to stabilise her as object and to doom her to immanence..." (Author's Introduction Iix). A woman is not allowed to reach beyond the limits set for her whereas a man is endowed with power which is beyond question. Sandra Lee Bartky considers "sexual objectification" as a powerful

psychological medium of control over a woman's body wherein her body is "reduced to the status of mere instruments" (26). Bartky's contention that, "... she is importantly a body designed to please or to excite" (80). Bartky also lays emphasis on the objectification of female body. Karnad's portrayal of the female characters into that of a marginalized lot, fall in line with the treatment given to a woman in our social construct. The author takes us into the world of romance and bizarre and at the same time addresses the contemporary social situation. His plays are at once replete with both existential and sociological concerns. "He rightly believes that the energy of the folk theatre comes from the fact that although it seems to uphold traditional values, it also has the means of questioning these values" (Dodiya55). The folk theatre promulgates the traditional values for the betterment of society as well as questions the incongruities lurking large in society. The analysis of the objectification of women and their search for an identity and the possibilities of liberation for women can be questioned through the fertile framework of the folk theatre.

The depiction of Karnad's female characters sets one's thoughts in motion about the prevailing situation of women in our society. The female body is the site of varied institutional and discursive forces. The thesis traces the workings of power that bar the voice, desires and gestures of the female body in an Indian set-up. Woman is not recognised as an individual but is considered fit only to be forced to the periphery. She is the one who is a particular type of individual endowed with only subdued discourses. The discursive institutions of marriage, family and society fall harsh upon her, thereby, making her the focus of a number of discursive

pressures. The body is disciplined and put under surveillance by the social pressures in order to assure and make functional its operations without being questioned.

The body becomes the site of discursive conflicts in the process of undergoing a political and social control. The characters find themselves lost in trying to locate their space in the process of “objectification” and this can be misunderstood as their own will to participate in their own subjugation. The body is required to behave in a certain way due to its social control. The characters take time to realise their social and political space during the process of subjugation. The person who is subjected is more involved in the process of turning oneself into a subject or so to say the subject has abstained itself from working towards one’s freedom and is completely participating in one’s own subjection, provided the process of subjection is started by an external agent. As according to the categorisation explained by Paul Rabinow in the introduction to *The Foucault Reader* (Rabinow, Introduction, *Reader* 3- 29), this subject is a passive one because there is no initial articulation and no person desires one’s own subjectivity. There is an urge to speak which might take place in the pressure of an outside authority as Foucault terms it as “confession”. This process of subjectification leading to one’s objectification is different in the sense that the subject has an innate desire to speak, as in the case of female characters in the plays under study.

The experience of being stifled in the process of subjectification and an urge to realise one’s identity prompts these characters to seek resistance as a possible way of their salvation. The female characters undergo a phase of mental anguish and it is only a considerable period of suffering that they come to realise the need to forge a

stable and distinct identity. This process involves breaking the shackles of disciplinary control. The journey of suffering, losing one's self and trying to give meaning to one's identity, is the journey of a body, fighting its way through the varied discursive conflicts exercised on that very body. The loss of identity finds its outlet by the expression of resistance and resistance, in the plays under study, is expressed by the female characters is in the form of transgression, intended or unintended. Resistance in the form of transgression is adopted by characters as a strategic answer to their subjection. The act of resistance and the resultant transgression has been traced in the thesis.

The thesis aims at proving that the female characters in the plays under consideration are the individuals who have been objectified into victim through the process of exclusion, which Foucault calls as "dividing practices". Karnad's female characters undergo a mental anguish on account of exclusion. There is a desire to break free from the immediate disciplinary apparatuses and a longing to be treated at par by those very disciplinary apparatuses. The discursive formations like marriage and home, invest the life of these characters by endowing them to perform the tasks which otherwise the characters would abstain from doing. The relations of power turn into an ordeal being fought by body as well as soul. A woman desires to be treated as an individual in her own right and not as a victim. The characters in the play take over the charge of shaping their own destinies even if ending in despair.

The relevance of myth for the contemporary times cannot be denied. Myth plays a powerful role in the study of any culture. Myth denotes the study of early history of people filled with supernatural events. Karnad's mythical plays have the

ability to relate the mythical events to the mundane experiences of the people. An Indian sense of culture depends heavily on myth. Moutushi Chakravartee's paper "Myth and Reality in *Hayavadana and Nagmandala*" (2008) reminds that "desires for women are considered a myth and the consequent punishment for such women as reality of society" (Tutun181- 87). The plays of Karnad draw their strength largely from this fact. Myth not only entertains but tends to imbibe instructions inherent in the stories. Myth has always been revered in our land and it has contributed to the strengthening of the social fabric of society. Hence, the plays of Girish Karnad, based on mythical background cater largely towards the working of a strengthened social fabric which calls into questions for a new hope of change. Since, a myth has the capacity to bind the old and the new, hence, their relevance in the contemporary social set- up.

Karnad points at the lower status of women in patriarchy. The role of women is found to be irrelevant as compared to men in a patriarchy. In *Yayati*, the female characters are relegated to the background which is very much a tradition of patriarchy. Women occupy space silently although an integral part of the action moves forward because of them. Women characters are voiceless in the play. As pointed out by Sridhar Rajeswaran, in his essay "Girish Karnad: Tying Beginnings to Ends" (2005), "Gender lacks agency and women have no part in the world of cause and effect and in the larger order" (129). According to B. Yadava Raju in his essay "Race and Gender in *Yayati*" (2008), the issue of class and class holds large in *Yayati* (82). He further holds that gender is a prominent feature of the play (83). The decisions taken by men as a part of patriarchal social set- up, expects women to

surrender to the will of the male decisions without a protest (86). B. Yadava Raju continues that patriarchal norms also expect a woman to prove her innocence. She is never taken on her worth (86). In the essay “Karnad’s *Yayati* Reconsidered” (2009), Seema Suneel is of the opinion that women are presented in a negative light as for instance identity for a woman is considered irrelevant at the time of King Yayati’s choice of Devayani. Sharmistha is said to have caused troubles in the life of others. Marriage is discussed from the point of view of a man and not woman. The same age-old tradition of serving the husband forms the basic framework of discussion here (104).

Deformities of various kinds continue to haunt our society. Even a writer of the stature of Karnad had to camouflage his views about the freedom deserved by women. Chastity forms the major argument in the battle for equality. The life of a woman is not free from the trials and tribulations. Sarat Babu’s analysis of *Nagamandala* in his essay, “Gender Deformity: Tendulkar’s *Kamala*, Karnad’s *Naga- Mandala* and Rakesh’s *Half- Way House*” (1977) affirms that Karnad made use of culture to destroy its own false values. He also holds the view that inequality in body and mind needs to be searched (15). The play mocks and questions at the unjust values of our patriarchal society (75). Shape shifting has been discussed by Makarand R. Paranjape in his essay “Metamorphosis as Metaphor: Shape Shifting in Karnad’s Plays” (2009) with respect to *Nagamandala* and *Hayavadana*. Shape-shifting, he says, is considered as a medium to escape from any kind of limitations psychical or otherwise (82-91). Chastity, has been discussed by Sarat Babu in the essay “The Concept of Chastity and *Naga- Mandala*” (2009), as a powerful weapon

to suppress women. Chastity continues to be a powerful instrument of gender bias. What more, women themselves, put it on women. (235-48). Marriage, forms the focus of discussion by Santosh Gupta in his essay “*Naga-Mandala: A Story of Marriage and Love*” (2009). He continues that Rani is isolated by Appanna. Whereas, he adds, that women do not go beyond the relationships that are built for and around them in patriarchy. *Nagamandala*, he adds, portrays marriage as a responsibility for both man and the woman when the question of the child comes into the focus. Desire to be loved, lands Rani into trouble. Marriage is full of uncertainties and doubts between the husband and the wife (249). Question of faithfulness sticks only to a woman (257), affirms Pranav Joshipura in his essay titled “*Naga-Mandala Reconsidered*” (2009). S.R. Jalote in his essay “Epic- Theatre Revisited: A Study of *Naga-Mandala*” (2009) is of the opinion that Rani’s trial can be compared to that of Sita in the *Ramayana* and both of them faced stiff traditional values that questioned the conduct of women (271). Veena Noble Dass in her essay “Psychology of Social Development: A Study of *Naga-Mandala* and *Tale- Danda*” (2009) analyzes the dreams of Rani by relating them to the psychological theory of regression (277). Chaturvedi and Dubey in their essay “Mechanism of Girish Karnad as a Dramatist” (2005) tried to put forth her views at the mutual co- ordination of men and women to attain progress (127).

Dhanavel in his book, *The Indian Imagination of Girish Karnad: Essays on Hayavadana* (2009) comments regarding the hypocrisy of Appanna, “Such a hypocritical attitude is rampant in many parts of the country, though women are liberated to great extent now” (Dhanavel110). Bansal and Kumar in their essay

“Emancipating Women: A Note on Women Empowerment in Girish Karnad’s *NagaMandala*” (2008) analyse *Nagamandala* as depicting empowerment and celebrating sensuality from a woman’s point of view (158). R. Radhiga Priyadarshini in her essay “Girish Karnad’s *NagaMandala*: An Archetypal Perspective” (2008) holds the opinion in her research paper that, “Whenever a woman suffers, Hindu mythology makes the earth as the ultimate asylum to her” (169). Ranbir Singh in his essay, “The Bold and The Meek” (2005), calls the suffering Indian women as dumb and confused. Rani is meek enough to accept Appanna of the day and that during the night without doubts or questions. He also adds that the freedom of expression is denied to the Indian women (78). Interestingly Rajeswaran in his essay “Girish Karnad: Tying Beginning to Ends” (2005) is of the opinion that Rani is able to alter the conditions of her trial and win respect for herself (135). Shastri and Kumar in their essay “Locating Bakhtinian Carnival in Girish Karnad’s *Hayavadana* and *Nagamandala*” (2005) write about Rani’s acceptance of her husband’s behavior (145). Bakhtinian concept of Carnival has been also been discussed with respect to *Nagamandala* and *Hayavadana* by them in same essay. It is discussed that Rani and Padmini are able to overthrow the structures of patriarchal authority at different points (150). The carnival signals towards a celebration of life by doing away with hierarchical structures. This also calls for a need for half- truths to avoid day to day threat to life. Truth in disguise is advocated in the Bakhtinian concept of Carnival (150). George in his essay “*Nagamandala* as a Folk/Fake Morality Play: A Study of the Folk Paradigm in Karnad’s Play in the Light of the Naga Cult of Kerala” (2008), discusses *Nagamandala* as a morality play where also femininity is suppressed by power and that its liberation is only possible by its

sensuality (214). Sharmila Sreekumar and K.C.Bindu in their essay “Performing Woman, Performing Body: Adapting *Nagamandala* for Feminist Theatre” (2008), declare chastity as a prime virtue for women. They also affirm body as the site for identity creation and identity communication and regulations imposed on body (217). As, in their words, “Rani feels unworthy because her body is not used by Appanna, and Madhavi because her only use is her body” (219). Smitha Sankara Narayanan in her research paper, “Power Structures in Karnad’s Play *Nagamandala*”, (2015) view the power of myths on human beings. Power of superstitions, power of a husband over wife, power of language over people, power of women over men, power of law over public, power of medicines, power of stories and the power of death (166-173).

Physical deformity is a part of human nature but it is much talked about with respect to women as can be ascertained from these essays. It is a result of the politics in gender relationships. Karnad’s plays are looked at from a post- modern perspective in the essays that question the age-old traditions. In his essay “Physical Deformity: Karnad’s *Hayavadana*, Tendulkar’s *Sakharam Binder* and Sircar’s *Evam Indrajit*”, (1977) Sarat Babu pointed out the alienation of the mind and the body undergone by all the characters. Geeta Kumar in her essay “The Play of Power- Politics: A Study of *Tuglaq*, *Hayavadana* and *Tale- Danda*” (2009), discuss power- politics with reference to the possession of Padmini’s heart (98). B.Indira in the essay, “The Edible Woman and Girish Karnad’s *Hayavadana*” (2009) sees Padmini as woman trying to find ‘wholeness’ in desiring both Devadutta and Kapila (172). Suman Bala in her essay “This Mad Dance of Incompleteness: Search for Completeness” (2009), considers Padmini as a modern emancipated woman who lingers between husband

and another man (197). Pranav Joshipura in his essay “*Hayavadana* and the Interminable Quest for Perfection” (2009), finds *Hayavadana* as an attempt by Karnad to present incomplete individuals and the world as alien to one’s emotions (203). Savita Goel in her essay “Folk Theatre Strategies in *Hayavadana*” (2009) research paper is of the opinion that the indigenous folk theatre while adhering to the roots ventures into the themes of identity, search for completion and a shattering of one’s glass house in confrontation with a modern world (4-12). M. Sarat Babu in his essay “Dionysian Ego in *Hayavadana*” (2009) finds ‘sati’ by Padmini as attributed to the disillusionment brought by her failure to achieve unity of body and mind (226-30). Jayadeep Sarangi in the essay “Myth, History and Tradition: A Study of Girish Karnad’s *Hayavadana* and *Tuglaq*” (2007), while quoting the female chorus, “Why love should stick to the sap of a single body?” (70), depicts Padmini as longing for the body of Kapila and the intellect of Devadutta (127).

A woman, as seen in the context of Karnadian plays, is derided for her desire. Her open behaviour is also considered as objectionable. In his essay “Girish Karnad’s *Hayavadana*: A Postcolonial Fruition” (2008), Jha points out that Padmini is denigrated because of her desire for both men. It is the indulgence that leads an individual astray and turns everything else into a chaos. But Karnad presents this as caused by Padmini only (75). Vanitha in her essay “The Third Eye Vision in Girish Karnad’s *Hayavadana*” (2008) calls Padmini as an inconsistent woman (77). Kumud Agarwal in her essay “Evolving the Man: A Note on Girish Karnad’s *Hayavadana* as Drama of Evolutionary Impulse in Man” (2008), is right in pointing out that Padmini is caught for every word she speaks in praise of Kapila (85). Jaya Kapoor in her

essay “Use of Mask by Girish Karnad in “*Hayavadana*” and O’Neill’s “*Memoranda on Masks*”: Relevance in the Contemporary Context” (2007) finds a discontentment of desire (71). M.K. Naik in his essay “From the Horse’s Mouth: A Study of *Hayavadana*” (2008) points out that Padmini’s use of creative purpose is a vain attempt (140). Erin. B. Mee in her essay “*Hayavadana*: Model of Complexity” (2008) considers *Hayavadana* as a conflict between self and other (149).

Karnad’s plays are a reflection of the stark realities existing in our society. Mental agony due to humiliation and the undignified attitude towards women finds its resonance in the plays of Karnad. Ranjana Chanana in her essay “Myth as Aesthetic Experience in Girish Karnad’s *The Fire and the Rain*” (2007) considers the play as voicing the contemporary realities reflected by the playwright through his play. Vishakha, for her is a victim of sexual exploitation of her father-in-law, Raibhya (81). Chanana also adds that Vishakha undergoes alienation, humiliation and the isolation of being considered an undignified woman. Vishakha openly accepts her transgression in front of Raibhya. Emotional turmoil of Vishakha is described with respect to the theory of *rasa* (84). According to Anupama Shukla and Alka Saxena in their essay “The Symbol of Agni in Karnad’s *The Fire and the Rain*” (2007), the character of Nittilai symbolises truth and purity (31). Shukla and Saxena further affirm that Vishakha is dissatisfied both when abandoned by her husband and also when used as an instrument for his experiments (45). Both continue with the opinion that Nittilai is charged with betraying her husband (48). Sridhar Rajeswaran in his essay “Girish Karnad: Tying Beginnings to Ends” (2005) considers Vishakha and Nittilai as embodiments of desire, of its fulfilment to knowledge and through it to

power (139). P. Jayalakshmi in her essay “Politics of Power: A Study of Gender and Caste in *The Fire and the Rain*” (2008) considers that Parvasu remains unmindful of the rumours of Vishakha’s transgression (251). She further affirms that both Vishakha and Nittilai are the inevitable victims of power- struggle (255). Mala Renganathan in her essay “Woman as Director: Re-Reading *The Fire and the Rain*” (2008) agrees to the fact that Vishakha is a sexually exploited woman who sees her body “to drip and rot” (166) and he emphasis on the need to highlight women’s search for identity and emancipation (270).

The emancipation of even the upper- class women is confined within the traditional boundaries set for them and it can well be ascertained from the play, *Bali: The Sacrifice*. Karnad is not oblivion to the miserable condition of women in our society. *The Queen* in *Bali: The Sacrifice* is seen as easily drawn and a common lady (95) by Binod Mishra in his essay “Girish Karnad’s *Bali: The Sacrifice*: A Voice of Reason against a Saga of Myth” (2008) Mishra also affirms that the Queen is bothered by the hollow traditions and way of life in the palace. The Queen also prefers to die rather than submit (97). Anshuman Khanna in his essay “Dialogic Ramifications in Karnad’s *Bali: The Sacrifice*” (2008) considers the Queen to be enamoured of the Mahout. He adds that she is conscious of the notion of violence and she is the one who defies the circumscribed notions (110). Interestingly, Madhubala Saxena in her essay “Portraying the Inner Landscape: A Peep into the Characters of Girish Karnad’s *Bali: The Sacrifice*” (2008) adds that the Queen is said to be oblivion of the feelings and traditions of others. He presents the Queen in a negative shade (123). Sridhar Rajeswaran in his essay “Girish Karnad: Tying

Beginnings to Ends” (2005) notes the Queen’s betrayal of her husband (140). In this connection even Mahout’s reaction to Queen’s adultery is to be noted, “... a woman slips but it doesn’t have to be for the worst (116). Sumita Roy in her essay “Negotiating Ideological Spaces: Reading *Bali: The Sacrifice*” (2008), also finds the Queen guilty and also charges her of hiding her face after committing adultery and a strict adherence to principles as her lacking point (288). S. Subhash Chandran in his essay “*Bali: The Sacrifice* and Dionysian Life Assertion” (2008), considers the play as dealing with adultery (298) and according to him there was an imminence of death (302). Shubha Mishra in her essay, “Reading and (Mis) reading Girish Karnad’s *Bali: The Sacrifice* in the Light of Foucault’s Panopticon” (2008), describes the power situation of all the four characters. These characters, she says, live in suspicion of each other and the self. She adds that the social noose of public gaze hung over the King, the Queen and the Queen Mother. She talks about the beliefs and superstitions to be followed by women (127). Binod Mishra in his essay “Girish Karnad’s *Bali: The Sacrifice*: A Voice of Reason against a Saga of Myth” (2008) affirms that the sense of shame or the fear of punishment impels the Queen to stab herself (147).

Shobha Diwakar in her article, “Flowering Tributary of Indian English Drama Girish Karnad: A Study of *Naga-Mandala*” (2013) discusses the cultural and social pattern with respect to *Nagamandala* and a realisation of the significance of the interdependence of men and women as essential scheme of the universe. G.A. Ghanshyam’s article, “A Web of Socio- Psycho and Cultural Aspects in the Plays of Girish Karnad” (2013) focuses on a particular society as having its own culture and also that myth forms an integral part of a social set- up. Saurabh Mishra in his article,

“Magnum Opus of Man Woman Relationships in the Background of Indian Sensibility in Girish Karnad’s – *Hayavadana, Naga- Mandala, Tuglaq, Yayati, The Fire and the Rain* and *Tale- Danda*” (2013) wants the reader to imagine if women were given the power because according to him women are represented as underdogs in the plays of Girish Karnad. Krishna Singh’s article, “Genesis of Titles and Evolution of Themes in the Plays of Girish Karnad” (2013) discusses the problems and challenges of contemporary life with respect to Karnad’s plays. Shahewar Syed and Aparna Tiwari in their article, “The Traditional and the Contemporary: A Study of Technique in Girish Karnad’s *Nagamandala*” (2013) raises the important question of liberation for women in a society which requires a woman to be a “goddess” and a “mother”.

The confluence of tradition and modernity can be seen in *Wedding Album* as Karnad attempts to present a modern Indian family in miniature. Alpna Saini in her research paper, Girish Karnad’s “*Wedding Album: The Mythical Discourse of Culture*” (2012), discusses the Foucauldian concept of subjectivity with respect to tradition and modernity. Further the mythical and the cultural discourse and their space in subjectivity are discussed with reference to *Wedding Album*. She enumerates how discourse of culture, morality and tradition are associated with a sense of guilt and remorse with particular reference to the characters of Rohit and Radhabai. She adds that women as Devi win the approval in a patriarchal system (42-46).

The book, *Indian Drama Today: A Study in the Theme of Cultural Deformity* by Manchi Babu Sarat (1977), talks about drama as a genre that truly reflects cultural deformity in man. Inequality, the writer says, does not confine itself to society but

invades human body, mind and soul. The book is a study on Girish Karnad's impact on the rebellion against cultural hegemony. The book talks about the culturally allotted roles to women owing to their faculties of nurturing and intuition. Gender deformity is instrumental in making men and women incomplete and an easy prey to oppression. The author, talks about chastity as of utmost importance for women and the taboo of extra- marital as marking the limitations in a marriage for women.

Indian English Literature by Basavraj Naikar (2004) describes the beautiful handling of myths by Karnad with reference to *The Fire and the Rain*. Karnad was able to mould and modify the original myth to give a reflection of it in the contemporary times. Naik affirms how the playwright tries to show how knowledge without the basic human traits of compassion and humanity results in destructive egos and jealousies.

The book, *Contemporary Indian Drama: Astride Two Traditions* (2005) edited by Urmil Talwar and Bandana Chakrabarty, discusses the twin aspects of performance and text. The book also discusses the ability of a myth to transcend language and culture. The book suggests regional plays to be the need of the hour. The book appreciates Karnad's attempts at amalgamating the traditional and modern aspects of life, culminating in his plays through their expression through folk tales, myths, history and legend. The book gives an account of the lack of strength in the female characters. Women, in this book, are said to be voiceless and inactive in the larger order of the world. The conflict of the body and the mind with respect to *Hayavadana* is discussed. The Bhaktinian concept of carnival is discussed. Women are said to be privileged in the plays of Girish Karnad. Desire on the part of the

female protagonist is said to drive the plot onward from the complication to the resolution. Rani, is said to be gaining an upper hand after her trial and her case is labelled as a “classic case of equivocation” (154).

The book, *Perspectives and Challenges in Indian- English Drama* (2007) edited by Neeru Tandon discusses drama as the ‘fifth Veda’. It establishes the importance of drama in society. The introduction to the book sets forth drama as the imitation of life. The origin of the drama is traced back from the Vedic period and its origin makes drama unique in the literary world. Girish Karnad’s as an emissary of Indian art and culture and his immense contribution to playwright has been commemorated in the book. The book also recognises the importance of regional plays as well as their translations in English to have reached the four corners of the country. The book opines about the unconvincing nature of Indian drama in English towards Indianisation. The book comments on Girish Karnad’s pre-occupation with the traditional and the modern aspects of drama and his attempts to synthesise both through the Brechtian techniques. The book, speaks about the moral weaknesses in his plays. Bloodshed, violence and sexual perversion with respect to *Bali: The Sacrifice* is discussed. The book illustrates the existential issues like identity, split personality, ideological break-ups and dichotomy of life in Karnad’s plays. The problem of identity in *Hayavadana*, of personal space in *Nagamandala* and the use of the symbols of fire in *The Fire and the Rain* are looked at in the book. The importance of mask to represent the conflict between the body and the soul is described to reveal the inner traits through subtle replacements.

Contemporary Indian Drama (2007) by Shubha Tiwari discusses the folk strategies of half curtains and Karnad's use of it for symbolic significance. The book discusses the use of Indian imagery in Karnad's plays with reference to *Nagamandala* and *Hayavadana*. The play, *The Fire and the Rain* has been discussed as delving deep into the female psyche. A fundamental aspect of 'Rasa' as an essential aesthetic experience is discussed. The play is said to be replete with universal values as a result of the blending of the western and the Indian forms of playwriting.

Thunder on Stage: A Study of Girish Karnad's (2008), plays by C. L. Khatri and Sudhir K. Arora, starts with a biographical sketch of the playwright. Karnad, a popular playwright and a media personality voiced socio- cultural concerns despite the other worldly treatment in his plays. The plays cater to the common man. The book also discusses the various Brechtian techniques like anti- cathartic approach, doing away with the unity of action, drama as a means of social transformation and the use of myths and masks to produce 'complex seeing' and 'alienation effect'. Existentialism as an important theme with respect to *Yayati* and *Hayavadana* have been discussed. The book questions the basis of human values in front of physical gratification with respect to *Yayati* and *Hayavadana*. The basic human emotions and their role in the moral order are also questioned at by Karnad. The magical element is brought to coincide with the mundane. The struggle for completeness, as in *Hayavadana* is considered desirable in man. The book also gives a detailed account of the existential dilemma faced by the four characters in *Bali: The Sacrifice* wherein Karnad has questioned the superstitious beliefs and given a jolt to the system. There is a clash between the traditional and the instinctual. A culture is considered to be the

means of domination. The book sums up the theme of *Bali: The Sacrifice* as that of violence versus non- violence. The idea of the panopticon as a significant entity with reference to 'gaze' and 'surveillance' finds treatment with respect to *Bali: The Sacrifice*. The moral failings on the part of the Queen are said to be because of the song of the Mahout. The patriarchal system is forced upon the Queen by her mother-in-law. Religion as an institution is said to oppress human beings. Rani in *Nagamandala* is said to acquire empowerment after the trial and her triumph is suggested as an empowerment. *Nagamandala* is considered to be a celebration of sensuality from a woman's point of view. Caste conflicts are said to inflict *The Fire and the Rain*. The myth presents the fragility of human society. The play is dominated by jealousies and egos.

Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives (2008) by Tutun Mukherjee, opens with Karnad's ability to reconcile the theatre and the text. Karnad's plays are presented for university syllabi and are equally successful as stage performances. Mukherjee's interview with Karnad is very illuminating as regards his plays and the background of his plays which cater to the indigenous as well as to the western influences. Race, caste and gender have been discussed in this book with respect to *Yayati*, *The Fire and the Rain*, *Nagamandala* and *Hayavadana*. *Hayavadana* is shown as a confrontation of opposites, as that of the self and the other. Karnad's theatre is critical. *Nagamandala* is read as a morality play and the character of Naga is imbued with ritual in a cultural tradition. The book also explores women's sexuality within the confinement of domesticity. Chastity has been impressed upon as a permanent virtue for women.

The Plays of Girish Karnad (2009) by J. Dodiya gives an account of Karnad's childhood experiences of watching the plays. Space, with respect to home, found an important element in his plays and which was determined by the characters' social status and caste. The book discusses the importance of the mask as an ethical archetype with respect to the Indian theatre and its contribution to create contemporary consciousness. His plays have given a new meaning to our existence by binding the past and the present. In *Hayavadana*, it is the Apollonian ego; in *Nagamandala*, the unjust values of the patriarchal society are mocked at. Karnad moved away from the regionalist theatre of Kannada tradition. The playwright voiced his concerns for the Indian theatre in the post- independence period and worked towards defining its 'Indianness'.

The Indian Imagination of Girish Karnad: Essays on Hayavadana (2009) by P. Dhanavel, presents the plays of Girish Karnad as moving from a romantic vision of a world to a confrontation with harsh reality. Identity crisis and incompleteness are a matter of concern in *Hayavadana* is suggested by Karnad and is to be dealt with reconciliation with one's self. The problem of identity- crisis is presented from a psycho- social dimension. Identity crisis is complicated by moral problem, ambiguity in love, friendship and marriage. The switching of heads puts Padmini's identity at stake. There can be a solution to the moral problem but not the psychological one. The question of identity remains unanswered by the playwright himself. Characters in *Hayavadana* encounter a bizarre world with their desires being shattered ultimately. P. Dhanavel also presents the Lacanian aspect of desire with respect to the play *Hayavadana*. Karnad's plays are appreciated by P. Dhanavel for their very Indianness and making them rise to the stature of world drama.

The book, *Indian English Drama: A Study in Myths* by Nand Kumar (2011) apprises the reader of Karnad's deftness at handling myths and projecting them into handling social and psychological problems. The subject matter of Karnad's plays is native and the form is essentially western. The book studies *Yayati* from existential point of view, *Hayavadana* as a play indicating the fulfilment of human destiny and *Nagamandala* as a surrealist play.

The book, *Indian Drama in English: Some Perspectives* by Dr. Abha Shukla Kaushik (2013) discusses how myth and folklore have been used by Girish Karnad to convey the mechanisms of human nature. The book in addition to a general discussion on Indian Drama has seven chapters dedicated to an analysis of the plays of Girish Karnad. These chapters abound in a discussion on various issues that are relevant to the contemporary times.

Karnad attempted to present the inferior status of women in our society. Unsolved questions reflected in the mythical traditions are again put forward and the readers are titillated to think beyond the traditions to answer the requirements of contemporary significance. Anupama Mohan in her research paper, "Girish Karnad's *Nagamandala*: Problematizing Feminism" (2009), states that Karnad deflates the concept of chastity in his play that holds the patriarchal mythic imagination across religion and language. She views the tale of Rani as a feminist agenda with the themes of fate, chastity and social role of women tied to the play. In her research paper, "Impact of Brechtian Theory on Girish Karnad: An Analysis of *Hayavadana* and *Yayati*" (2013), Deepa Kumawat, has discussed the doing away of with Aristotle's dramatic technique in favour of Brechtian features like alienation effect,

epic theatre, complex- seeing and anti- cathartic. In her article, “Myth and Mythology in Girish Karnad’s *Nagamandala*” (2013), Naga. J. Madhuri, discusses the play in the light of Karnad’s adeptness at the handling of myths for giving a new meaning to the otherwise adopted story. Jemima Daniel in her paper, “Treatment of Myth in Girish Karnad’s Play, *The Fire and the Rain*” (2013) has traced the path of hero and discussed the play as replete with basic human emotions of jealousy, betrayal, deceit, selfless love, sacrifice, moral righteousness, love and duty. The paper, “Girish Karnad as a Myth Intoxicated Modern Playwright” (2014) by Godugunuri Prasad tells about man- woman relationship with respect to the institution of marriage in a post colonial social set- up. The paper seems inadequate as it establishes only the themes of the plays. In the research paper, “Gender Bias Versus Power of Sexuality: A Study of Girish Karnad’s: *Naga- Mandala*” (2015), Swastika Muduli, defines and explains gender from the standpoint of Judith Butler’s theory. She discusses the play *Nagamandala* with respect to the character of Rani in a traditional mould and Rani’s realisation of Naga as not her actual husband. She also mentions the snake- ordeal as an author’s attempt to relate the chastity test of Sita from the epic Ramayana. Subjection of women in patriarchy is discussed by her with respect to Rani. She also expresses the opinion that a woman’s talent is confined to the household and otherwise is silent, absent and powerless. Dr. Apeksha in her paper, “Girish Karnad: Feminism and the Plight of Sub- Altern” (2015), find the female characters as sub-alterns and considers Karnad as an epitome of unconventional wisdom, champion of feminism and an aggressive proponent of gender justice who deconstructed myth into modern sensibility. C.L. Khatri in his article “Script of Submission and Subversion: A Critique of Girish Karnad’s Women” (2016), divide the female characters of

Karnad's plays into submissive and subversive. He is of the opinion that Karnad reworked with traditional and modern archetypes of female characters and presents a feminist perspective through his plays. He also holds the opinion that Karnad's plays had an impact on the audience. In "Women's Struggle with Identity and their Space of Honour", K. Dasaradhi, in the research paper, "Women's Struggle with Identity and their Space of Honour" (2015) has considered the characters in the post- colonial context in which they have the desire to achieve what they lack and they commit suicide incase they fail to reach out for same. Vijaylakhshmi and Danaraddi in their research paper, "De- Colonised Women Characters in Girish Karnad's Plays" (2016), talk about gender- bias in Karnad's plays and they are of the opinion that women's talent is confined to household and they are powerless. "Voice of Women on Irrational Religious Acts: An Observation on Girish Karnad's Play, *Bali: The Sacrifice*" (2017), by S. Pavani, discusses the attitude and response of the Queen, the Queen Mother and the King towards sacrifices, violence and religious rituals. The paper shows the repression of the Queen through religion and the rituals associated with the performance of sacrifices. Munmi Hazarika in her paper "Feminine Sensibility in Girish Karnad's Plays" (2017) expresses the view that Karnad deliberately employed women characters to raise their voice against injustices and oppression and made an attempt to free them from male chauvinism. Smita Dhantal in her paper, "Women Characters in the Select Plays of Girish Karnad and Vijay Tendulkar" (2018) cites the ill-treatment of women in patriarchy and the assigning of the opposite role of a devil or a deity in a male- oriented society. Kempanna Rachappa Donawad in her article "A Feminist Study of Girish Karnad's *Naga – Mandala*" (2016) discusses the play as a magical tale and sensuality of a woman

from a woman's point of view. Pallavi Gupta, in her paper, "Split in Identity in *Hayavadana*" (2016), looks at the play from the lens of a folktale wherein she discusses the split in identity and also the point that Padmini fails to understand herself. The unacceptance of truth and a longing for what seems to be the impossible forms the crux of this paper. "Girish Karna's *Wedding Album: The Mythical Discourse*" (2012) by Alpna Saini discusses the discourse of culture and morality. A sense of guilt and remorse overcome by Rohit and Radhabai are presented in the paper. The research paper, "Mythology and Identity: A Study of Karnad's *Hayavadana*" (2015) by Shweta Tiwari, speaks about the traits of self-negation, docility and restraint that are desirable in a woman in a patriarchal society but also valorized. N. Padmapriyadharshini Kavithanjali in her research paper, "Projection of Female Characters by Girish Karnad's with Reference to His Plays *Hayavadana* and *Nagamandala*" (2019), writes about the post-modern Indian women who fight for their freedom and strive hard to understand their place in society. She opines that women want modernity but still stick to patriarchy. Aparna Dharwadker's article "Girish Karnad, Icon Who Transformed Modern Indian Theatre" (2019), talks about the norms of society, being violated by the desires of the female characters in the plays replete with truth. Shweta Pandey and Gulshan Das in their paper, "Plays of Girish Karnad as a Social Document" (2020), write about Karnad's plays portraying the beauty as well as the ills of society. They write about human being as part of a social scenario and also about the duty of human beings in society.

The essays, books and research papers enumerated above show a consistency in the gender-inequality as a social issue of significant importance. The sub-themes

like marriage, love, identity, incomplete, sexual exploitation, chastity, adultery have been a lot under discussion. An essay by Shubha Mishra studies the four characters of *Bali: The Sacrifice* under the umbrella term “panopticon” discusses all the four characters. The entire review of literature revolves around Girish Karnad as a playwright worked incessantly for the cause of the upliftment of the marginal sections of society. As for the review of literature, feminist aspect of the study looms large. A Foucauldian analysis consisting of a discussion of the major precepts of Foucault, are found lacking in the review of literature. The present study takes into account the analysis of female characters with Michel Foucault’s precepts in their entirety. The common point of study of the marginalised is identified in the works of Girish Karnad and that of the works of Michel Foucault. The thesis attempts to emphasise on the need for emancipation for women which the ever- going debate on gender inequality continues to reflect. Women have been the victims of ‘gender politics’ and an analysis of the female characters in the plays under consideration tries to forestall the same in the light of Foucauldian precepts like power, knowledge, discourse, discipline, resistance in detail. The objectification of women and its problematisation with the concept of identity forms the core of this thesis. The lack of dignity in women is a pointer towards the inadequacy of emancipation with respect to women in the present times. Gender- equality is a basic human right which needs to be analysed for the upliftment of the marginalised ‘other’.

The research methodology in the context of the present thesis looks into the new insights of the problem already stated in the preceding paragraph. In the exploratory aspect, books, essays and research papers were explored by the

scholar. Research papers on web were read and those found to be relevant were inculcated in to the framework of the thesis. The scholar equipped herself with Girish Karnad's plays and took time to understand some of the major precepts of Michel Foucault in his works so that the same may be used to analyse the female characters of the plays under study. The scholar also visited the library of Punjab University, Chandigarh and found the research works on Girish Karnad lacking in substantial thought. The motivation behind the research is the persistence of inequality in gender. Since the researcher relies on the information available in the form of texts, the said research is to be context based and analytical in approach. The research aims to face a concrete social problem, viz, the exclusion of women in our social set-up and the lack of emancipation. The research caters to the issues that lead to social upheavals. Further, the study also takes into account 'cultural studies' that analyses the views, opinions, motives and emotions of the characters in the plays under study. The theoretical framework of the Foucauldian precepts forms the background for the analysis of the female characters in the plays under consideration. The content analysis will assist in making insights into the issues pertaining to women. The research is a humble attempt that aims at facilitating the loosening of stern ties of enmity in the social relationships due to gender inequality.

The thesis takes up the English translation of plays by Girish Karnad. The plays under study are *Yayati*, *Hayavadana*, *Nagamandala*, *The Fire and the Rain*, *Bali: The Sacrifice* and *Wedding Album*. The thesis attempts to undertake a Foucauldian analysis of the female characters in the plays under consideration. For this purpose, the precepts of Michel Foucault with respect to relations of power,

discourse, knowledge, discipline and resistance will form the basic framework of argument in the thesis. The objective of the thesis is to trace the objectification of the female body and to analyse the repercussions of the relations of power on the same, making the female body as a site for discursive conflicts. The plays will be analysed in a way treating them as a journey of the female characters and their struggle to be an individual in their own right. Women, in our society, serve as a crucial lot where the servings of the relations of power result in the deprivation of their right to a dignified living. The thesis will also attempt to seek if the female characters achieve to break the stereotyping through resistance. The scholar will attempt to analyse if the female characters are able to transform their objectification to a situation of an emancipated woman. As such, the following are the objectives that will be traced in the course of the thesis. 1. To determine the need of emancipation for women. 2. To establish the workings of gender politics through the study of female characters in the select plays of Girish Karnad. 3. To analyse the objectification of the female characters in the select plays of Girish Karnad and its relevance with the contemporary times. 4. To point out the gender equality as a basic human right. 5. To indicate the lack of dignity with respect to women as reflected in the select plays of Girish Karnad. The methodologies which the thesis incorporates in attaining its objectives are analytical, conceptual and contextual.

The chapters deal with major ideas of Michel Foucault that find their mention in his works taken under consideration. The first chapter titled, *The Problematization of Identity: Disempowered Karnadian Female Characters* explores the female body as the site of discursive conflicts. The chapter deals with the concept of identity not only

as a problematic but also as one of the major concerns of Foucault in his oeuvre. Keeping in mind the dividing practices and the objectification of women in our society, the chapter delves into the ambivalence around a woman's identity and her struggle with the same. The next chapter, Objectification through Discourse: The Silenced Other discusses discourse as the cause as well as the effect of the relations of power. Discourse assists in our perception of the outside world. Discourse, as a language and also as an unwritten norm affects through social practices. The next chapter, Objectification through Discipline: Female Characters under Surveillance analyzes the situation of women as bodies in submission and the impact of discipline and punishment on them. The next chapter, Possibilities of Resistance: Locating Identities explores resistance in the relations of power while at the same time relating it to a realisation of one's identity in the relations of power. Resistance not only configures the struggles that emerge in the relations of power but as a realisation of that lost identity which every soul, pines for, of course, here in the present context, with reference to the female characters. These chapters will be followed by a conclusion. The female characters are found to be objectified into a victim that stands as a powerful testimony to the atrocities of a male dominated patriarchal set-up. A woman lives with individuality or an identity as imposed upon her by the patriarchy, conferring on her what Foucault terms as 'the other' (Foucault, *Essential* 138).

The Foucauldian analysis of the female characters in the select plays of Girish Karnad involves the interdisciplinary study. The precepts laid by Michel Foucault forms the groundwork for the representation of female characters in the plays of Girish Karnad. A 'Culture' is in the foremost defined and known by the individuals it

inhabits. The word, individual or even mankind must be understood to mean women also. Role of literature as a strong determinant of change in a social set- up cannot be denied. The objectification of women is a result of the dividing practices of 'exclusion' meant to keep them at the periphery. The institutions, of family, marriage and society are run by keeping women at a distance. Men never set the pace of their steps with women. Power operates the workings of identity, discourse, discipline and resistance and all of these are displayed and enacted on the body which occupies a physical space and is aware of the world it inhabits. The thesis interrogates the very conditions and denial of this very space to a woman.

Chapter- 2

The Problematization of Identity: Disempowered Karnadian Female Characters

Problematization refers to a re- evaluation of a problem in detail. It involves taking a comprehensive view of a certain perspective with respect to the available context. According to Michel Foucault, “It is the ensemble of discursive and non- discursive practices that make something enter into the play of true and false and constitute it as an object of thought. (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis etc)” (Foucault, *Essential* Introduction xvii). Foucault also explains it in short, it is “...work of thought” (Foucault, *Essential* 24). Problematization is an inquiry to the how and why of a problem. So, to say, problematization means to reach to a deeper understanding of the issue in question. The development of a problem into a question and its mutation into a problem requiring manifold solutions in order to form a response for that problem constitutes problematization. Michel Foucault, during his lifetime, participated in various identity movements. One comes across the concepts of identity, exclusion, and marginalisation in his works. Foucault was cognizant of the exclusion of the marginalised in a social set up. Exclusion marks identity through the process of subjugation. Foucault’s categorisation of people into the normal and the abnormal foregrounds the idea of identity further. In his view, we understand the normal by pitting it against the abnormal. Foucault explained the word abnormal with respect to the classification of individuals into the human monster, the onanist and the individual to be corrected without the aid of law (Foucault, *Ethics* 51- 57). The thesis, inculcates the abnormal as stated in the third

sense as the individual which is meant to be corrected. The patriarchal society continues with this kind of categorisation where, being a woman, calls for their segregation into an abnormal, right from her birth. Identities are formed as a result of this categorisation. Problematisation is the confrontation of a problem with politics. According to Kate Millet, “The term “politics” refers to power structured relationship of arrangements whereby one group is controlled by another” (Millet 23). A woman is being identified as the ‘other’ who is someone lesser than man. An individual’s behaviour determines his identity and in the case of a woman, the seeking of freedom is considered as a part of her abnormality. Foucault himself includes relations of power and relation to oneself and to others as the fundamental elements of any experience (Foucault, *Essential* 23). Identity is marred as well as shaped to suit the requirement by subjugation. The emergence of the problem of identity as a political issue calls for a consideration of disempowerment of women that bars them from moving beyond the fixed boundaries. The identity of a woman in a male- centred society is wrapped up in the norms prescribed by that very society. Foucault’s works, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: 1, The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality: 2, Power and Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* and *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* are incorporated in this chapter. According to Foucault, power operates in the relationship between the individual and the institutions. An individual is the product of what an institution makes out of him. The role of the social structures in the constitution of an individual was considered of a paramount significance by Foucault. The power operating between the institutions and the individual resulted in manufacturing of particular identities. It is in such a

manner that a woman's body becomes her very identity. Foucault infers, "She inhabited the outer edge of the "world," in which she always had to appear as a value, and of the family, where she was assigned a new destiny charged with conjugal and parental obligations" (Foucault, *History 1*: 121). Foucault's precepts stood as a direct challenge to the display of fallacious incorporations in everyday discourses. My humble attempt in this chapter is to show how a woman's body is a site where the problematization of identity becomes an urgent concern and the resultant disempowered existence that a woman has to put through in her life.

The feminist agreed to the fact that there exist unequal power relations between men and women. This finds ample representation in the literary texts. Girish Karnad's plays imbibe similar concern for the inequalities that are visible in the hidden crevices of our social set-up. The female characters under study offer an ample analysis to a discerning reader as they cater to a vast plethora of the life lived by women in our contemporary society. The significance of the women forming an important part of a social system cannot be denied. The mythical background of the plays and the contemporary times in which the plays have been written might hold a different perspective but what holds common between the two is that the attitude regarding women has undergone no change with times. There is a need for writing and re-writing about the emancipation of women. Karnad's plays under this study resonate with a concern for the oppressed and the weak and this in turn co-relates to Foucault's study of the marginalised. Marginalised is someone who remains on the fringes in a social set-up. The marginalised in the present context of study are the female characters in the plays. The unconventional representation of female characters in the plays under study raises the question of their debilitated identities.

Karnad as a writer is sensitive to the distortions with respect to gender in our society. Time honoured taboos and the social space occupied by women forms the sensitive area where the study concerning their identity can be relevant. It is due to the inequalities that men and women are constantly engaged in the formation of disparities. The inferior status of women can be understood in the author's introduction to Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* "He is the Subject, he is the Absolute - she is the Other" (Parshley, Author's Introduction xlv). The man is the subject and the woman is the other as enumerated by Simone de Beauvoir in her epoch making book *The Second Sex* and her oft quoted words in the same book "One is not born but becomes a woman"(Beauvoir 281), emphasise the existential dilemma of being born a woman. A woman's identity is settled right from her birth. The designation of the other leads to her segregation and works as a sign of identity assigned to her. The sexual difference between men and women is the major cause of inequality.

Foucault was largely concerned with the methods with which modern civilisations created and controlled human subject. As enumerated in the preface to the introduction to Foucault worked on a kind of history that dealt with "... forms and modalities of the relation to the self by which the individual constitutes and recognises himself qua subject-..." (Foucault, Introduction, *Essential* xx) and Foucault also talks about "... the problematizations through which being offers itself to be necessarily thought- and the practices on the basis of which those problematizations are formed "(Foucault, Introduction, *Essential* xx). This brings to the forefront our concern for the human beings as the site for various 'practices'. Foucault's concern with the lived experience of an individual brought an individual

to be viewed in a new light. The female characters in the plays under study are depicted as transgressors. Transgression is a repercussion of a long duration of binding one's identity to the set norms. The plays reverberate with their journey in an attempt to seek an identity. Sharmistha, Devayani, Chitrlekha and Swarnalata in *Yayati*, Rani in *Nagamandala*, Padmini in *Hayavadana*, Vishakha and Nittilai in *The Fire and the Rain*, the Queen and the Queen Mother in *Bali: The Sacrifice* and Vidula in *Wedding Album* are the ones who can be stamped as transgressors for falling out of the boundaries set for them in a social space that they happen to inhabit. The plays are about their existential angst in which they find themselves surrounded by the indefiniteness of their identities.

A woman's body combines the different aspects as temporal, alluring, sensual and generative. Sharmistha in *Yayati* and Padmini in *Hayavadana* have been marked as seductresses. The generative side of a woman is represented as another medium of exploitation for women, as in *Bali: The Sacrifice*. The situation of a woman as can be seen in the plays under study is the way in which a patriarchal society attributes particular values to the woman's body and how a woman assimilates these values. She lives her life inside the definition of a wife or a mother as accorded to her in a patriarchal set-up. The objectification of the woman's body has always been decried by the feminists but the fact remains that women continue to face their objectification till date. Sheila Rowbotham opines that a woman is considered 'as part of nature' and a woman is required to equip herself to the extent of serving men and this self-sufficiency of woman is by no means meant to be considered for her independence (Rowbotham 38). A mother or a faithful wife is stereotyped. Her sexuality, desire or identity is determined and specified by the social norms that exist because of that

very patriarchal thinking. M. Sarat Babu while explaining the social deformities in our society has written, “Inequality does not confine itself to society but invades human body, mind and soul” (Babu 15). It is the imprint of this inequality that the body, mind and soul of a woman bears and this is what leads to her objectification and hence her victimisation.

Foucault terms the objectivising of the subject as ‘dividing practices’ (Foucault, *Essential* 126). Foucault states, “I have studied the objectivising of the subject in what I shall call “dividing practices”, the subject is either divided inside him-self or divided from others. This process objectivises him” (Foucault, *Essential* 126). The division is both ways from others as well as from one’s own self. In both cases the objectification takes place and puts the individual in the category of exclusion. In case of the subject being divided from others, there occurs an exclusion of that subject and putting that subject in a particular social set up, the objectification of the subject takes place. The subject is then the object, a victimised object. The objectification of an individual gives a social and a personal identity to an individual, an identity set according to the premises of that society. The ‘dividing practices’ (Foucault, *Essential* 126) are very much a part of a cultural construct although not confined to a particular culture or society. Every society is inflicted with these dividing practices, the intensity of which may vary according to a particular social space. These divisions result from the exhibition of power over an individual. Such practices are called ‘immediate’ by Foucault because these exist where there are close ties between the people or what Foucault terms as ‘micro politics’ (Foucault, *Reader*) or the struggles at the grass root level. The ‘dividing practices’ question the status of an individual. To quote Foucault,

“On the one hand, they assert the right to be different and underline everything that makes individuals truly individuals. On the other hand, they attack everything that separates the individual, breaks his links with others, split up community life, forces the individual back on himself, and ties him to his own identity in a constraining way” (Foucault, *Essential* 129).

The lines can be said to clearly indicate that there occurs a natural differentiation between men and women. It is something that defines their physical identities. This differentiation then moves over to the social ostracism. No doubt, a woman is an individual different from man. Yet, the ‘dividing practices’ separate them in such a manner and to such an extent in a patriarchal set-up that the split between the existence of the two becomes largely apparent. As a result, an individual is forced to isolation and finds it difficult to define one’s own identity or to cope up with the one imposed upon them. It must be mentioned here that identity is constructed through the social interaction of an individual with the institutions that one is a part of. It can then be understood that dividing practices gave an identity to the individual in a social space of which gender forms a prominent part with respect to that social space.

Judith Butler’s work *Gender Trouble* is replete with her concern with the subject formation. Her works ponder over the process of the formation of the subject. The role of power structures in the formation of identity has also been her concern. Butler considered identity as a sequence of acts and associated the existence of a subject’s identification with the performance of these very acts. The performance of acts takes place due to the workings of power. This is something that is applicable to

everyday life. It is by and through the workings of such power that an individual is categorised. Foucault held the view that such individuals carry the mark of their identity. Such an imposition of identity is characterised by the 'general politics of truth' (Foucault, *Power* 131) that an individual is made to believe and live with. The general politics of truth referred to by Foucault refers to the truth in the form of knowledge dispersed in the shape as it is meant to be by those in authority. Foucault was greatly critical of the very idea of an absolute truth. Truth can then be explained as, "Truth is centred on the form of scientific discourse and the institutions which produce it; it is subject to constant economic and political incitement (the demand for truth, as much for economic production as for political power); ..." (Foucault, *Power* 131). There is no absolute truth. The words clearly state that truth is what the discourses of the dominant will impress it with. Nancy Harstock contends in her chapter "Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women" that the concept of power is associated strongly with the words, male and masculinity. She affirms that the study and a consideration of the concept of power would help in changing the sub-ordinate status of women. She writes for the need of an understanding of the workings of power. Her chapter also reflects upon the relevance of the relations of domination to the situation of women (Nicholson *Feminism* 157-75). Identities thus constituted are no more left in a situation to question the ruling 'episteme' of the day. Episteme as enumerated by Foucault is the norm placed on the kind of knowledge at a given period (Foucault *Archaeology* 191). Subjection, subjugation and objectification then form a part of domination and exploitation. The continuation of domination and exploitation of women calls for an interrogation of their objectification as a result of their exclusion through the 'dividing practices'.

The question of identity as enumerated by Foucault in “Technologies of the Self” (Foucault *Essential* 145-69) does not limit identity to the outward body but to the soul as well. Identity according to Foucault refers to how one takes care of one’s soul. The soul is in a reverie with the divine element and the resulting realisation of the soul towards its betterment forestalls the Foucauldian notion. This fulfilment of the soul helps in achieving one’s search for an identity and determines one’s conduct or behaviour. Knowing oneself is knowledge and knowledge is in a way establishing hold over power, a control over self.

Foucault’s works reflect his interest in studying the effects of power on an individual. Individual according to him was the end product, a result of power-relations. His interest lay in studying the body as an entity in relation to the various institutions specifically, their interaction in a social space. Foucault’s interest laid in the power that moulded and shaped the body without being visible as targeting the bodies as an object. The body, he said, gets marked and influenced by the social institutions. Judith Butler expresses Beauvoir’s opinion about the female body as being marked within the masculinist discourse where the masculine body remains unmarked (Butler, *Gender* 17). Beauvoir contends that the female body is “marked off” as being insignificant (Butler, *Gender* 17). The female characters, in the plays remind one of such individuals in the shape of living bodies which get influenced by the social institutions of marriage, family and society and the discursive forces that shape the resultant identities. The female bodies are segregated in a patriarchal set up. The female body is physically subjected to oppression and made to behave in a way that fulfils the requirements of the institution of patriarchy. In *Yayati*, King

Yayati in the form of patriarchal authority administers his male control over all women in the palace, even Chitrlekha, Puru's newly-wedded wife.

In the Foucauldian sense, a body is seen as a site where power is enacted and contested. *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: I* studies the impact of the institutional and the discursive forces on the body. Institutional or discursive forces employ power as a strategic situation to subjugate an individual. It is the female body that due to the operations of the discursive forces is found to be constituted for subordination as well as suffering in a social set-up. The existential angst of the survival brings forth to us the dilemma of a body caught up in the meshes of the conflict rendered helpless by the discursive forces which Paul Rabinow has rightly explained in an introduction in the book "... as a victim caught in the processes of objectification and constraint ..." (Foucault, *Reader* 10).

Foucault's essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy and History" suggests that "The body is the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration (Foucault, *Language* 148). It is owing to the individual as the 'place' where power is enacted and the 'place' where it is resisted that the body of that individual comes to acquire the idea of a surface reflecting the events as well as the affects of those very events. Patriarchal norms in a cultural construct tell the tale of such events which bring the deterioration of a body held in its clutches since ages and as Sandra Lee Bartky puts it, "... women have no memory of a 'time before': ..." (Bartky 25) Women in a patriarchal set-up offer the sensitive discursive sites where the workings of power-relations are most visible. There is a

dissociation of the body and mind. The disintegration of the soul fails to nurture a body that also lies disintegrated.

The body is described by him as ‘the illusion of a substantial unity’ and a volume in perpetual disintegration’ (Foucault, *Language* 148). The role of history and the process of historical events do have an impact on the body. Foucault views body as a historically and culturally specific entity. A body lives and experiences its day- to- day existence while remaining within the confines of a culture. The identity and the existence of a body, is not outside the existence of historical events of the period and the cultural context of which it forms a part. As Kate Millet contends that the image of women is created by men and such an image is in accordance with the needs of men (Millet 46). Bodies are moulded and shaped by culture and the historical conditions. This lends a kind of instability to these bodies. The bodies are made to behave in a certain manner through their subjugation and exclusion. These bodies might adhere to the rules not of their own free will. The behaviour of the female body is controlled by social pressures exercised by the control of the discursive elements. As according to Foucault, “... the body in most cases the only property accessible; ...” (Foucault, *Discipline* 25). Body is the nearest target where the workings of power- relations are imminent.

Foucault’s analysis of the relation between the institutions and the body and the way power holds its sway in the form of the institutions, can help in establishing the link between the institution and the way that a body acquires its identity through these institutions. The female characters in the plays do render such bodies in constitution for the study. The female body is the site of ‘political struggle’ and the

plays witness the bodies under subjugation which obey the commands of the dominant apparatus of marriage. Madan Sarup expresses the view of Foucault that “... the body is the privileged target of the mechanisms of power relation ...” (Sarup 86), Body is always at loss as a result of the workings of power relations. At the same time, the female characters, in the plays under study, stifle breathlessly within their imposed identities.

Yayati has four female characters. The author states in the preface how the first theatrical presentation of the play became impossible due to the unavailability of female characters. Devayani, Sharmistha, Chitrlekha and Swarnlatha are the female characters. Devayani and Sharmistha, who were once best companions, part with their friendship on the question of Devayani belonging to a superior race and Sharmistha is designated as a “cheap harridan” (17). Later in the play King Yayati calls her a “conviving barbarian” (46). Devayani disappointed by Sharmistha, who then, realises her position in the eyes of Devayani whom she has treasured as a friend for so long. Sharmistha is a rakshasi, a marginalised woman. Sharmistha is made to believe as lacking even after possessing beauty, education and wealth. Tribal princess but inferiority of her race forces her to recede to background. She finds her freedom curtailed when she is disallowed by King Yayati to move beyond the precincts of the palace. There is strict demarcation between Aryans and the Raksha clan. She is sent as a slave to Devayani when the latter is taken by King Yayati as his wife. King Yayati reminds Sharmistha of her royal lineage and of her behaviour as not suiting her birth. Sharmistha hardly remembers her royal lineage after being confined to the four walls of King Yayati’s palace. The identity of a slave has been inscribed on

Sharmistha despite her royal lineage. Her confinement is the cause of her discontentment and she fails to find a way out of her situation. King Yayati criticises her conduct of behaving like a ‘cheap harridan’ inspite of her royal lineage. Sharmistha in her words below not only expresses her discontent of being a slave in Yayati’s palace but shows her concern for the plight of innumerable slaves that the King owns.

SHARMISTHA. But have you ever wondered what it does to a person to be mad slave? It turns that a person into an animal. A domesticated animal...All your vileness extracted from you.” (1.17)

SHARMISTHA: ... I snarl because I want to retain a particle of my original self. I abuse and rave to retrieve an iota of it.... (1.18)

Sharmistha finds her life no different from that of an animal. She keeps a vial of poison given to her by her father in case she found it difficult to survive in King Yayati’s palace. Swarnalatha, Devayani’s maid understands her situation from where others put her and her words aptly tells her tale. Swarnalatha has learnt to live her life as others expect her to.

SWARNALATA. I know. No one expects that from Swarnalata. I am expected to be jolly. Keep everyone’s spirits up, be the life and soul of the palace. But madam, I can’t tell you how scared I am of the shadows that curl around my jokes. (1. 8)

Swarnalata’s husband deserted her on grounds of infidelity and such doubts lacked ample evidence. She is unaware of her husband’s suicide and waits for his

return each day. Swaranalatha lives a life of loneliness as punishment for the fault which the poor woman never actually committed. Sandra Lee Bartky contention holds good here, “All sorts of women have known in their daily lives the low self-esteem that is attendant upon cultural depreciation, the humiliation of sexual objectification, the troubled relationship to a socially inferiorised body, ...” (Bartky 9).

Sharmistha tells Devayani the pre-requisites for a woman to get chosen by a man.

SHARMISTHA. Just think of when Yayati saw you first. You were in a well covered in mud and filth. Scratched. Bleeding. Your clothes in tatters. You think he fell in love with that spectacle? (1. 12)

Sharmistha is right in judging the King. Devayani’s fate is no better than hers. She too, has to suffer the pangs of being born a woman. Devayani is considered worth for King Yayati’s consideration not because of her personal capabilities but because of her being Shukracharya’s daughter. Kate Millet opines in her book *Sexual Politics* “Women entertain, please, gratify, satisfy and flatter men with their sexuality. (57) Devayani makes a very crucial remark to King Yayati at how the king treats women.

DEVAYANI. If you had deserted me after we first made love, left me on the bed of leaves, no one would have blamed you. Kings are used to women throwing themselves at them. I too would have kept silent from fear and shame. Why then did you marry me? (1. 14)

King Yayati's answer is very obvious as reflective of patriarchal psyche.

YAYATI. At that moment you were an apparition of the kind I had never seen before: dirty, dishevelled, ravishing. All at once. (1.14)

Devayani is continuously aware of Yayati's fondness for youth and beauty. She considers herself as less worthy in beauty for the king. Devayani never fails to find herself just as another ordinary woman meant for entertaining the king as and when desired by him. Devayani is not only jealous but considers Sharmistha as a threat to her marriage. Sharmistha on her part considers her body not worth for the King and when King Yayati holds her back to prevent her from consuming poison, Sharmistha reacts by telling him that her "... arms have thorns". (1.21)

The colour of Sharmistha's skin is enough to enslave her in King Yayati's palace. Identity comes to be closely identified with one's caste affiliations. Sharmistha finds herself as out of place and she also considers Devayani a Brahmin, as not belonging to a Kshatriya palace. Owing to her rakshasi clan, Sharmistha is hated by everyone in the palace, even the servants in the palace.

Chitrlekha, young Pooru's newly wedded wife has to undergo the existential dilemma of being with a husband who took upon himself his father's curse of old age. Chitrlekha stands in panic and as a newly-wed bride is frightened to see the aged and the decrepit body of Pooru.

The fact of objectification of the woman, being an object of man's amusement is impressed upon Devayani in patriarchy. Devayani reminds Yayati of having held her by her right hand that makes it mandatory for King Yayati to marry her. When Devayani expresses her doubts regarding King Yayati's decision to marry

her, the King affirms her by telling that he married her for beauty. At the same time, King Yayati detests Sharmistha for the logic that she talks with. For the King, women are an object of a man's desire and nothing beyond it. He calls Sharmistha an "accursed thing" and a "deranged witch" (15) for putting doubts in the mind of Devayani through her logical talk. King Yayati delivers sermons to Sharmistha over the obligation of a royal princess to behave in a dignified manner. Sharmistha's answer to him reminds one about the question of identity. She tells him the situation of a slave converted from a person into an animal. The slave has to lose one's sense of selfhood in order to submit before an authority.

SHARMISTHA. To be a good slave is to have all your vileness extracted from you. (1.17)

A body does not want to submit but under compulsions of subjugation, is made to behave and live in the manner in which the authority requires it to. An individual is reduced to mental and physical debauchery. Sharmistha yearns for her original self, her tribal way of a carefree living. The restricted way of life in the palace, stand in direct opposition to her carefree life in the forest. Sharmistha loves her primitive way of life characterised by chaos and meaninglessness. She finds the life of the Aryas as too demanding on a person's individuality.

SHARMISTHA. I was a perfect rakshasa princess. Spoilt. Proud. (1.19)

Her words describe her caste affiliations where nothing mattered. Her awareness of the contempt shown by the Aryas towards her tribe shows her knowledge of the boundaries existing between the civilised world and that of the untamed.

Clothes in the plays under study form significant markers of one's identity. Sharmistha used to consider herself at par with Devayani but the exchange of their blouses during a bath in the river and Devayani's shock at finding her piece of cloth on Sharmistha's body marks the starting point of conflict between the two. In the present context of the thesis, it is to be viewed from the differentiation in dress marking the body to which it belongs, nay, it should belong.

The continued rejection of Sharmistha in the palace sets her ablaze with fire.

SHARMISTHA. I am a barbarian. My arms have thorns. (1.21)

She starts looking at herself from the perspective of the onlookers, who fall outside her existence. Her comparison of her body with the thorns, show the low self-esteem that she comes to associate her body with. King Yayati intentionally holds Sharmistha with his right hand and announces to make her his queen. Devayani grants freedom to Sharmistha as she finds her a threat to her marriage. Sharmistha also makes full use of her body to acquire the attention of the King. Her words,

SHARMISTHA. As a slave, what weapon did I have but a body? (2.29)

reveal her intentions to take her revenge on Devayani by becoming the King's consort.

The body endowed with beauty is considered as a pre-requisite for a woman to achieve a good companion in matrimony. Chitrlekha, married to King Yayati's son Puru says,

CHITRALEKHA. A Bharata prince would not have married a woman not beautiful. (2.36)

Even Pooru finds himself in a difficult situation with respect to Chitrlekha although he willingly took upon himself the old age of his father. His thoughts about Chitrlekha as,

POORU. From her birth, she has been groomed for this moment and when it arrives, what does she find? Me. (2.37)

Chitrlekha for her part also finds her husband's old age as repulsive. The patriarchal grooming and the imposition on a woman's body to reproduce, echoes in her words,

CHITRALEKHA. ... I married him for his youth. For his potential to plant the seed of the Bharatas in my womb. (4. 65)

King Yayati imposes his rule on Chitrlekha by reminding her of her duties towards her husband and the affiliations of a marriage that Yayati finds only Chitrlekha to abide by following her husband, Pooru. King Yayati tells her,

YAYATI. ...That you would walk in the path marked by his footprints: whether home or into the wilderness. (4. 62)

Swarnalata, Devayani's maid finds herself at loss when her husband finds out the secret that her male teacher used to visit her house at night to teach her. Her husband's suspicion ruined their otherwise peaceful conjugal life. Swarnalata is punished for a fault that she never committed. The glass house of her marital life breaks to pieces once her bodily affiliations fall under suspicion. The King is aware that her husband committed suicide, not being able to take his wife's misconceived infidelity. Swarnalata keeps on waiting for her husband's return.

SWARNALATA. I still deck myself up as a married woman ... (4. 60)

Godugunuri Prasad in his research paper titled “Girish Karnad as a Myth Intoxicated Modern Playwright” (2014) talks about the pursuit of pleasure by King Yayati (238-43). I agree and would like to add in this context that pleasure as a principal need is understood of foremost significance only for a man not just in the play but also in the contemporary modern times as well. I further hold the opinion that King Yayati not only gives prime importance to his own pleasures of life but confines the female characters like Sharmistha, Devayani and Chitralekha to have nothing to do with the same. It is worth noting the way King Yayati tells his son, Pooru, about the maid- servant’s tragic life wherein her husband leaves home when this maid- servant, Swarnalata, confesses her assumed infidelity so as to evade the situation in which her husband puts her by constant questioning. Body of a woman is not meant to gather any pleasure. For men like King Yayati, pleasure is forbidden arena for women. The play speaks volumes about the inferior status of women in our society and the writer’s observation of the need for a myth to bring home a point that could otherwise be unacceptable in our social set- up even for a general consideration.

Nagamandala opens with the description of Rani as not found lacking in beauty. She is described as the one having long hair and her limbs are described to be very young.

KURUDAVVA. How beautiful you are. Ears like hibiscus. Skin like young mango leaves. Lips like rolls of silk. (1.32)

This is the description that reminds one of a young Indian bride. The old and the blind Kurrudeva does not fail to feel the beauty of Rani with her old fingers. Appanna, Rani's husband fails to appreciate the beauty of his newly wedded bride. Appanna only finds her fit to cook and wait upon him. Rani recognises herself only in terms of what others think of her.

RANI. They call me Rani. (1. 31)

The words are very significant in the sense that a woman is brought up outside the precincts of her existence. She recognises her existence with respect to that of others. It would be worthwhile to consider that Foucault does not ascribe fixity to an identity as for him the identity changes according to the changing interactions. Rani is rejected by her husband, Appanna and is deprived of her rightful position in his life and the household. The sad spectacle of Rani being locked inside the house and left by herself, brings to one's mind the Indian housewives who have never stepped out of their houses and spend their life time cooking and fending for their husbands and children. Foucault rightly puts it, "... the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body" (Foucault, *Discipline* 26). It is only the benefit that is sought out of a woman's body in her role of a wife and a mother. Appanna rejects Rani in favour of a concubine. Kurrudevva tells her son,

KURUDAVVA. He keeps his wife locked up like a caged bird? (1.30)

The play reminds one of the prevalence of prostitution in a society that weakens the fabric of the institution of marriage and the wives are imprisoned inside

the four walls of the house after marriage. Rani's ill treatment at the hands of her husband brings to her mind the condition of her mother when she was to leave her house. She becomes thoughtful at how her mother started shedding tears the day Rani matured and also mentions how her mother was crying at the time of her marriage. Rani's parents are aware of what would befall their child brought up with love and affection after marriage. It would again be noted that women like Rani come to identify themselves through their husbands.

RANI. Suppose something happens to my husband? What will my fate be?

(1. 37)

Kate Millet opined that women are taught from their childhood how important it is to be soft in temper along with obedience and right conduct because that would win them the protection of a man and in case a woman is beautiful, nothing else will be needed (Millet 48). A woman associates her identity with her husband. Rani is slapped by her husband for going out as she is completely forbidden to come out of the house. Rani actually went out of the house to throw the blood red curry which she hesitated to give to her husband for fear of causing harm to her husband. Rani does not intend to win the love of her husband by giving him any magical potion. The patriarchal limitations set on the body of a woman can be seen in Rani being summoned in front of the village elders to explain her pregnancy and the ordeal set for her to prove the purity of her body. Rani lives a life of inner conflict where her mind fails to decide the behaviour of her husband that differs during the day and the night. Rani puts to rest the inquisitive part in herself and comes to identify herself as a silent creature. Her body is put to test when she is asked by the

village elders to prove her purity by putting her hands in boiling water or touch the hot iron rod or put her hand in the anthill of a cobra. The patriarchal norms did not hesitate to cause pain to a woman's body in order to certify if she was guilty or not. Rani at this point of time stands as a scared child. She has to make herself answerable by making her body go through pain. Ranbir Sinh in his paper "The Bold and the Meek" (2005) asserts, "Rani is the picture of Indian womanhood, who meekly submits to fate" (Talwar and Tiwari 78). I agree that it is in total submission that women spend their life time without questioning the kind of life that they have been submitted to. Godugunuri Prasad in his paper, "Girish Karnad as a Myth Intoxicated Modern Playwright" (2014), mentions about the acceptance by Appanna of Rani's divine side (238-43). I strongly disagree on this point. It is in utter helplessness that Appanna takes back Rani as his wife. Appanna obeys the decision of the village elders but he is sure that he is definitely not the father of the child that Rani carries in her womb. Appanna is done by those very norms of patriarchy that at one point of time he sought refuge to outdo Rani's dignity in front of the whole village. For him Rani's child can never be said to belong to him and hence his silence at the course of events that turn up contrary to what he intended.

The female character of Kurudevva, an old and blind woman brings into question of women being left alone or deserted by their families. Her son, Kappanna, disappears. The woman is left to wander from place to place searching and crying out for her son. Nobody pays any heed to her as the villagers are gathered to testify the sanctity of Rani.

Hayavadana presents the existential dilemma of achieving perfection. It is something connected with achieving more than one is. Padmini, the female character

in the play is the one who longs for what is forbidden in the patriarchal framework of existence. Padmini is described by Devadutta as “the Shyama Nayika”- born of Kalidasa’s magic description- as Vatsyayana had dreamt her” (85). Devadutta is bitten by her beauty and takes a pledge to offer his head and arms to the deities in case he is able to marry her. Devadutta’s friend Kapila also describes Padmini as

DEVADUTTA. Yakshini, Shakuntala, Urvashi, Indumati- all rolled into one.
(1.87)

Beauty for a woman is considered as a strong weapon for winning the heart of a man. It is the body that in its outward appearance has to appear pleasing to the onlooker to make her acceptable in society. The play offers a very interesting incident when Kapila brings fortunate lady’s flowers for Padmini. He tells her the reason why he chose those flowers for her. To quote from the play,

KAPILA. Because it has all the marks of marriage a woman puts on. The yellow on the petals-then the red round patch at the bottom of the petals-like on your foreheads-then-here-that thin saffron line-like in the parting of your hair-Then-uhm ...oh yes-here near the stem a row of black dots-like a necklace of black heads-(1. 97)

A married woman in our social set up is easily recognisable from what has just been described in the play. The colours like yellow and red and things like saffron or black heads in a necklace are considered an indispensable part of a married woman’s identity. Padmini’s beauty becomes her identity. Beauty is one aspect of the physical appearance of an individual and in case of Padmini, it lands her in confusion. Padmini also desires something beyond the precincts of boundaries set up for a woman that is, she desires the intellect of Devadutta and the comely body of

Devadutta's friend Kapila. Padmini's desires are expressed by the female chorus as desire for a woman is a forbidden realm and the writer has to employ this technique to give expression to a woman's thoughts which otherwise can never find a normal outlet for their expression. When the two men fight to death for Padmini, she is left with no option but to commit sati, which is another 'episteme' that forms a formidable aspect of our social-construct. Desire is considered as something alien for a woman. Chastity is an essential part of the social norms that are imposed upon a woman. Padmini performs sati to prove her chastity. She feels ashamed of herself to return home unaccompanied by her husband Devadutta who fought to death with Kapila. Padmini is very well aware of a system that thrusts upon her to follow the rules of chastity. As the feminist leader, Sunita Devi while challenging the patriarchal concept of chastity asserts, "Chastity is not natural to women. It has been enforced by man to satisfy his vanity" (Babu 17). Moral values are held in high esteem in our cultural construct and women are regarded as the very epitome of morality. These very values are laid down in a hierarchical order keeping in mind the rules of "exclusion". The social structures or institutions like marriage or family in our cultural construct mould these values and demarcate on the basis of gender where the women are required to do their best in the upkeep of moral values. Millet wrote "Woman is still denied sexual freedom and the biological control over her body through the cult of virginity, ..." (Millet 54). The sati system for long had been imposed upon women. It is still prevalent in few parts of the country. Infact there are sati temples where the sick and the diseased are believed to be cured as it is made to understand in our ancient custom that such women who renounce their lives after their husbands are considered to be chaste and acquire the power to heal. The author

points out a custom that is made to subjugate a woman and which does not only shatter her identity but also withdraws from her the very basic right of living her life after her husband's death. Karnad in his interview to Chaman Ahuja says, "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 quest for fulfilling both her desires of an intelligent mind and a shapely body speaks about her journey of seeking an impossibility which can never be accomplished in our cultural set-up. Her predicament to become whole requires an alteration in the natural order which is simply unachievable. Nevertheless, this search for completion, for an identity is a never-ending process leading many like Padmini to their doom. The given social order of our society demands a woman to be solely responsible for the preservation of the sanctity of that social order even at the cost of her life. Kapila is also responsible by his behaviour in the attraction that proves fatal. Devadutta's words clearly prove this,

DEVADUTTA. He only has to see her and he begins to wag his tail. Sit up on his hind legs as though he were afraid to let her words fall on the ground. (1.96)

Devadutta is highly critical of Kapila whom he finds running behind his wife, least forgetting that it was Devadutta who sent his friend Kapila to woo Padmini for him instead of doing it himself. According to Suman Bala in her paper, "This Mad Dance of Incompleteness: Search for completeness in *Hayavadana*," (2009) *Hayavadana* is a Brechtian kind of play employing native folk theatre strategies to present through a folk tale man's tragically futile aspiration for perfection" (191).

Padmini is a woman caught up in her desires and her tragic death is a result of a lack of freedom which binds her identity to unwritten rules.

Foucault was in favour of freedom of an individual. His ideas do not point in tying oneself to a particular identity. It can be said that identities result from subjugation and barring the individuals to come out of the boundaries fixed for them. An identity is an expression of a life lived by a body. A female body is that site of a discursive conflict where the desire to move beyond the set boundaries is marred by the workings of power- relations. It means a female body undergoes an objectification where its existence is monitored and controlled by the dominant “epistemes” (Foucault, Introduction, *Order* xxii) of the day. As a result, a woman loses the right to choose or what Foucault terms as “ethics” (Foucault, *Essential* 28). Ethics is the ability of an individual to desire what one wishes and what one is free to choose. In the case of a woman, she is neither free nor can wish to choose what she desires. Since her body has to follow the rules of “exclusion”, the resulting identities are in consonance with those very rules. Millet opined that such identities live in a self- refusal and they saw distorted images of themselves (Millet 47).

Bali: The Sacrifice brings forth the life of Queen Amritamati as a wife and a daughter- in - law. The play also shows her as a woman with respect to her physical union with the Mahout. The Queen is continuously baffled and struggles to locate her identity with respect to her husband and mother in law. The Queen, a Jain by faith, inculcates a reverence for her faith in her husband’s mind. So much so the King too becomes a Jain. The Queen’s life in the palace becomes difficult as her mother in law, the Queen Mother, believes in offering animal sacrifices to the Goddess. The

Queen's condemnation of violence becomes a continued source of struggle and is the cause of an existential angst to her. Although the King allows the Queen to practice her faith even after her marriage but the Queen makes it worse in her wish to have her faith followed by all others around her, not only by the King but also by objecting to any kind of sacrifices taking place inside the palace. The Queen's belief in non-violence comes into a direct clash with the norms of the palace where animal sacrifice is a normality. The Queen struggles with a conflict with her identity and fails to relate herself with the King's household. The Queen Mother, in order to cope up with her son's choice of a Jain wife tries to stay out of her way although she never approves of her son's choice. Here faith does presuppose her identity. The Queen is very particular about following non-violence as a way of life. The Queen's identity is also marred and subjugated on the persistent demand of the King for a male heir to the throne. The Queen is continuously aware of the gazing eyes of the King, the Queen Mother and all around her who assess her body. Her discontent is expressed these words,

QUEEN. ...To pretend you are unaware of their gaze as they scrutinize the roundness of your belly, ... (95)

The Queen Mother even expresses her doubts to the news of the Queen's pregnancy to her son, saying,

MOTHER. ... Are you sure she's pregnant? (99)

The King is not unaware of the pressure on his wife to produce an heir but at the same time he also is an active participant in creating that very pressure.

Her name, her faith and even the fact of belonging to a royalty are all forgotten when she embraces the Mahout. It is a slip of the moment that she explains it to her husband, the King. The Queen is actually yearning to be loved by her husband as a woman and that too, just for the sake of loving. The Queen expresses her heart out to the King in having another wife to bear children and wants herself as,

QUEEN. ... Then I could make love to you- for its own sake- to make love.

You don't know how I have pined for that. (95)

The Queen yearns for the King's genuine love without any expectations. She is continuously forced to produce a male heir. The refusal of unconditional love draws her unconsciously towards the Mahout. It is in her union with the Mahout that she feels elated and fulfilled. She does not feel the need of a name while being with the Mahout. She tells the King,

QUEEN. ... For one night I was nameless. (88)

The Queen feels free from the monotony of the life of being a royalty of proving oneself up to the expectations of the others. She also feels free to behave in an artificial manner with regard to herself and her faith as a way of life in front of the King and the Queen Mother.

For the Mahout, the Queen is just another woman. He takes pride in telling the Queen about his temper when she tries to open the door to make her way out of the dilapidated temple. The Mahout also warns her by informing how he has beaten women when they crossed him. The Mahout is forcing the Queen to reveal her identity before leaving the place but the Queen is also bent upon maintaining the

secrecy of her reality. The Queen's affection for the Mahout puts a doubt in the mind of the reader regarding her own belief in her austere Jain faith which puts restraint on following a loose way of life. The Queen expresses her likeness for the Mahout and tells him the reason why she came to him and also assures him of not forgetting him. She is averse to showing her face to the Mahout as she does not want him to enjoy the fact of touching her. Considering all this, it is worthwhile to quote Foucault here, "The marriage relation was the most intense focus of constraint. It was under constant surveillance. It had to plead its case before a witness. Breaking rules of marriage or seeking strange pleasures brought an equal measure of condemnation" (Foucault, *History* 1: 37-38). The Queen had to obey the time-honoured family tradition and this was her real burden that she was unable to bear. The King claims to her that she had ignored the tradition of sacrifices revered for long in his family and he also tells this as the reason of her miscarriages. The Queen's body is said to be bereft of motherhood for her non-conformity to the tradition held in high regard by the King's family, that of animal sacrifices.

The Queen feels disgusted and shattered at the way the King enquires from the Mahout about the sensitive parts of the Queen's body. The Mahout talks about the benefits that the King might be able to avail as a result of the intimacy he had with the Queen as to his awareness about the Queen. The King readily agrees.

MAHOUT: ... The benefits. Now, there's a thing or two I've noticed about your queen. (1.17)

KING. You have? What kind of a thing? (117)

The Queen is full of remorse at the way these two men talk about her as an object of entertainment. These words are indicative of the low opinion about women by men. The words clearly point at the attitude of patriarchy that denies any value to the essence to a female body. Millet referred to the sexuality of a woman in terms of, "... sexuality as subject to social forces" (118). The Mahout also takes pride in telling the King about the benefits that the King will avail from him in knowing about his own wife. There is a total disregard of the Queen's feelings for the King as well as the Mahout. What the Queen describes as beautiful to the King with respect to her union with the Mahout, it does not carry the same significance for the ugly and the commoner, Mahout. Women are identifiable as a game and an object meant for subjugation for men. The Queen fails to leave any impact on the Mahout also. She was just another woman for him as well. As for the King's love for her, he has more of false sentiments for the Queen than real feelings of love and kindness towards her. He fails to touch the loneliness inside his wife. Even when he proclaims to follow her Jain way of life, he reverts back to his mother's way of sacrifices the moment he finds himself in a difficult situation. As a husband he fails to shield his wife's secret from his mother and blurts out everything that ashamed the Queen further.

There is a mark of differentiation between the King and the Queen as small boy and girl. The play reels back to their childhood when both met as children in the Queen's palace. The young girl, the Queen, stops the boy, the King, from urinating on the rose bushes. The girl also argues with the boy over hunting and meat offerings that clashed against her non-violent way of life. The little girl at this age is very well aware of the prospective marriage between her and the prince. Young girls are from

the very beginning brought up in the way that whatever they do in their life enables them to be good house keepers.

The other female character in the play is that of the Queen Mother, the King's mother. She is very adamant in her way of life and refuses to budge from it. She has no liking for her daughter-in-law as she belongs to a faith that stands opposite to her belief. She also hates the Queen for feigning pregnancy and unable to give a male heir to the throne. The Queen mother takes pride in relating to her daughter-in-law the gory scene of being laid on the floor at the time of child birth for four consecutive days and putting her life in danger at the cost of giving an heir to the kingdom. She gave birth to the baby boy that made her a proud mother. For her daughter in law, the Queen Mother represents a continuity of the tradition of patriarchy. Child-birth hits hard on female body. The Queen Mother takes pride in relating to her daughter-in-law, the Queen, about her ecstasy after suffering during child-birth.

MOTHER. ... But labour began and the child refused to come out. They said the foetus was set traverse in the womb. For four days and nights I screamed in pain. I prayed for death so my child could live. Ultimately they pinned me down to the floor, spread-eagled, and the nurse shoved her hand into my uterus, twisted him around and pulled him out. I was screaming through the gag they had thrust into my mouth. (115)

Female body is the locus of a continuation of a life. It is this body that is expected to perform the difficult task of giving birth to a new life and this very body is pushed to the periphery and the risk to which her body is put, is thrown to the

winds. Procreation is taken more as a requirement of female body than as a blessing. As such, a female body is able to achieve the desired end only with the birth of a male child. This struggle for a male child is dominant in our social construct where the birth of a girl child is considered a bane for the family. The play resonates with the pressure imposed upon a female body to reproduce the desired male heir. The play also shows the imposition of the desired identity through caste affiliations whereby the faith of the daughter-in-law, here the Queen, is questioned upon in the household of the King. As said in Karnad's other play, *Taale Danda* (Karnad, *Collected* 69-125),

BIJJALA. One's caste is like one's skin ... (21)

Caste or the religion one belongs to is a determiner of one's behaviour and conduct in life, which means is a determiner of one's identity. Identity, then, stands for what is performed in our day to day life. A woman's faith is also judged within the parameters set forth in a patriarchy. The Queen is overcome by the existential anguish of either giving up her faith by agreeing to perform the sacrifice of the cock made of dough or to stick to her belief in not adhering to any kind of a sacrifice even though of a cock made of dough. Her caste affiliations do cater to building up of opinions around her identity. The need for the sacrifice arose as a penance for the sin committed by her union with the Mahout and of which the King was a spectator to. Chastity is considered of supreme value for a female body in a patriarchal set-up. The female body is set to penitence once found guilty according to the ruling episteme of the day. As explained by Shubha Tiwari in her book in the chapter entitled "Bharata's Viewpoint on Drama" (2007), self-realisation is the *rasa* and

this is what a soul aspires. Rasa involves total identification which implies loss of personal identity (Tiwari 8).

The play reverberates strongly with the condition of women in our contemporary set-up. The desire for a male child weighs heavily on a woman's body. Her body is considered worth when a woman is able to give birth to a male child. Girl foetus is aborted without any hesitation and it is well repeated episode in the upper strata of people also. The family she enters at once determines her exclusion by setting up of rules for her.

The Fire and the Rain with its mythical background traces the saga of age-old inferior status of women in our society. Vishakha and Nittilai are the female characters in the play. Both the women live a different kind of a life. Vishakha belongs to the upper caste Brahmins and Nittilai belongs to the tribal class. The status of both is same, that of a woman. Vishakha is abandoned first by her lover, Yavakri and then her husband, Parvasu. Since time immemorial, the body of a woman has been considered inferior to that of a man. Yajnas or sacrifices were considered to be desecrated by the presence of a woman. Only the males were found to be fit for the performance of Yajnas to honour or please the Gods. The play starts from here. Vishakha lives a life of isolation and neglect after her husband leaves her alone in the hermitage with her father-in-law. Parvasu has to renounce his wife in order to be able to perform sacrifices to please the Gods. Vishakha is bitten by her loneliness and Yavakri's little efforts, her former lover in the play, makes her surrender her body to him. Her situation can be aptly explained in these words by Foucault, "The body manifests the stigmata of past experience and also gives rise to desires, failings, and

errors” (Foucault, *Language* 148). Desire then comes in the form of a sudden expression and the body fails to overcome it. Parvasu’s neglect of his duties towards Vishakha are not questioned at but the moment she transgresses, the poor woman is held in derision by her father-in-law who is also guilty of having lust for her and of which Vishakha is very well aware as is clear from her words,

VISHAKHA. ... the old man’s curdled lust ... (2.142).

Vishakha does not mince words in accepting her guilt of having transgressed the rules of the institution of marriage. She yielded to Yavakri for the simple fact of recalling her old time love for him. After her husband’s desertion of her, Vishakha yearns for love and also yearns to have a word with someone. Vishakha never stopped loving Yavakri. It was in absence of Yavakri that she was made to marry Parvasu. Vishakha realises only when she comes to know the real fact behind Yavakri’s interest in her. Vishakha finds a loss of identity at having associated herself with Yavakri and Parvasu. The objectification of her as a victim of Parvasu’s ambition of achieving higher spiritual goals and then her objectification for the fulfilment of Yavakri’s thirst for revenge is heart rending. Vishakha appears to be a yellow leaf fallen from the tree that will never see the green tree and taste the sap of life. Vishakha recalls how her husband, Parvasu, manipulated her body. For both, Yavakri and Parvasu, Vishakha’s body is the site for manipulations to achieve their ends. None of them treated her like a human being who deserved tender feelings of human kindness. She expresses her union with Yavakri as,

VISHAKHA. ... One thinks one has stepped on to a bit of solid ground-a little haven- and the earth gives way-(2. 132)

This opinion is one sided because Yavakri only used her body as a medium of reviving the age- old conflict with Raibhya and Parvasu. Vishakha has no significant role in her husband's life also. She is made to behave like a puppet in his hands. Whatever he decides for him she follows without questioning him. She also fails to stop her husband from killing his father, Rabhiya. Vishakha belongs to the category of those upper caste women who live their life under the shadow of their husbands. Vishakha's father- in- law develops a lust for her and she has to live in the hermitage in the constant angst of the gaze of the beastly eyes feeding on her young body. Vishakha has to face violence from her father- in- law when he is able to get it out of her that she has been seeing Yavakri. Raibhya pulls her by her hair and starts beating her when she fails to answer him about her whereabouts. Arvasu intervenes to save her from the beatings of his father. Vishakha confesses her adultery for which is not ashamed of. Vishakha does not mince her words in describing to Yavakri, her happiness in the warmth of her union with him. Vishakha is not unaware of the insolence of both Yavakri and Parvasu towards her,

VISHAKHA. ...You both go away when you feel like it. Come back without
an explanation ... (2.140)

Vishakha is also aware of the uncertainty about the return of her husband even after the sacrifices are finished. Her silent disappearance from the hermitage at the end of the play signifies the inconsequence of her life and to that long deprivation to which women are subjected to in a social set- up where only men determine their course of life. A typical patriarchal set- up is shown in the play in which the men are lost in their obsessive pursuits of life that leaves little or no room for the female to fit in their world.

Nittilai is a tribal girl who is shown to live a free life as compared to the women of the upper class. A tribal girl, she is doubly marginalised. Nittilai is in love with a Brahmin boy, Arvasu, whom her father has no objection in marrying his daughter to. Arvasu utters the following words for tribal women as compared to those of his own caste,

ARVASU. ... Your women can be more lewd than your men. (1.111)

Arvasu does not have a good opinion about the tribal women although he is ardently in love with Nittilai. Nittilai is the embodiment of a good woman who follows the rules assigned to her in patriarchy. She does not allow Arvasu to touch her before marriage and her words point to the rules to which she is both accustomed to and has a reverence for. She tells Arvasu,

ARVASU. It's a nice custom. Sensible. Worth observing. (1.112)

The only difference is that she is fairly allowed by her tribal elders to choose her partner in marriage in case the situation arises. Arvasu fails to reach on time selected by the tribal elders because of which their marriage prospects are doomed forever. Nittilai is not unaware of the attitude of the high caste males towards the low caste ones. This is the reason she takes no time in understanding about the whereabouts of Vishakha as both she and Arvasu sees Vishkha's pot of water lying near the bushes. She also tells Arvasu that her father wanted to meet him soon as he believed that,

NITTILAI. ... These high- caste men are glad enough to bed our women but not to wed them. (1.114)

The words already echo the misuse of low caste women by those of the upper caste. Our society is not free from the physical exploitation of women whether high or low in the name of eternal love and in the case of low caste women, they are more vulnerable to such exploitation.

Nittilai does not get the privilege of marrying Arvasu. The elders of the village prevail upon her to marry the boy from their tribe. Nittilai loses her sense of identity and finds herself lost in her search for happiness which for her is with Arvasu. Her fleeing from her husband's house and nursing Arvasu in his injuries shows the rare courage of a woman who has no one who she can look forward to for help. She is left to wander alone in her search for Arvasu. Nittilai's identity is marked by her fearlessness. It is she who instils courage in Arvasu to face his brother, Parvasu who has been the cause of sufferings for Arvasu. She tells him,

NITTILAI. Why don't you decide? Don't push everything on to my shoulders
- (3.161)

Being an object of a male wrath, Nittilai's fate is no different. She is hunted down by her husband and brother who grab her by her hair and slashes her throat in one go. Foucault talks about 'political economy' (Foucault, *Power* 131) regarding the body where either there is use of violence or any other lenient method as a way of correction but the centre of concern is the body which offers utility, docility or submission. Women, then, high or low are considered the object who carry within themselves the honour of entire family to which they belong and if they fail, are the object of victimisation according to the rules of the patriarchy. Nittilai finds the light of life disappearing from her eyes. As a dying woman, she is scared to enter the dark world. She tells Arvasu,

ARVASU. ... I'm still young. I don't want to die. (3.161)

It is a young death as a punishment for loving a man out of one's caste. There is a concern of the writer for the contemporary issue of honour killings prevalent in our society.

Vishakha and Nittilai are the fountain head of motherhood. Vishakha tries to save Arvasu and Yavakri out of her love and concern that she has for them. She warns both of them at the cost of putting herself to danger. Nittilai, not only nurses Arvasu but also feed the starving children of the actor manager. She risks her life and acts as a shield for Arvasu. The Brahma Rakshsa describes her as a 'beautiful woman' and admonishes Arvasu not to raise her back to life because that would refute the very principles for which Nittilai stood for during her lifetime. This is the divine side of a woman that Karnad portrays in the depiction of these characters. The portrayal of the character of Nittilai draws our attention to the in-numerous honour killings in the country. Daughters are killed as her own choice of her prospective companion is considered a threat to the family honour. Honour killing is again what Foucault terms as 'body politic' and what he explains as "... power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitude, and modes of everyday behaviour" (Foucault, *Power* 125). A woman is subjected to gender violence in the sense where the word honour is again specified by a culture that she is bound to. The hold of patriarchal culture is enforced through the access of power of the patriarchal norms over the body. The price of love is paid by the life that desired to have its own way. A woman's conflict with the set norms turns into a never-ending conflict with her own 'self'.

Wedding Album described as a ‘modern myth’ (Karnad Introduction, *Wedding* ix) in the foreword to the play breaks down the assumptions about the emancipation of women. The play which seems to echo the post- colonial reverberations brings the question of chastity as of utmost importance as a part of our cultural construct. Freedom or emancipation for women is yet again proved to be an illusion. The concept of marriage is the dilemma that a woman lives and relives, no matter how much modernisation has been embarked upon. The Nadkarnis present a middle- class Brahmin household in which the marriage of Vidula Nadkarni forms the main plot of the play. Women undergoing an emotional anguish in the Indian household, form the common background in the play for the female characters in the play. Vidula is made to talk about herself to her prospective bridegroom. She is required to put her best as in the apt words of her brother, Rohit who is handling the camera for her,

ROHIT. ... But remember, you are trying to show your best face to him. (1.5)

Rohit sets up the prime requirement for his sister to appear her best as far as her looks were concerned. Vidula’s answer is,

VIDULA: I am not glamorous, as you can see. I am not exceptional in any way. (1.6)

It makes all the more clear that her awareness of her inadequacy in beauty and thus, less presentable to a man she has never actually met except for the videos and thus at a risk of being rejected. Vidula does not even want to endeavour to become better. She is honest enough in telling her inability to cook or work in an office. She

does not fit the requirements of a perfect wife. Her brother Rohit describes her as a 'nice girl' (9) which still mean to avoid having boyfriends and affairs as a prime quality for a girl to be given the designation of being 'nice'. Vidula is ready to get married to the boy she has never met. The patriarchal set up requires her to marry from amongst her own caste. The decision for an arranged marriage according to the set norms such as remaining within one's caste in the choice of one's partner in marriage determines Vidula's identity here. In a technocrat world, a woman's self is analysed by a video call in which Vidula tries to put her best. The body has no independent existence. The very idea of being a female is performed in the day to day life and this comes as a consequence of a performance with respect to the situation and the people around one. To quote the words of Meenakshi Thappan, "It is in relation to others, especially significant others, that the embodied self is constituted and understood" (Thappan 5). Identity, in the post- modern era, finds ample treatment in *Wedding Album*. Vidula's secret corporeal desires find out their expression in the darkness of a cyber cafe. The same Vidula finds it all too easy to give up eating fish just because her prospective husband requires her to fit herself in the frame moulded by her husband. This is where Foucault's concept of identity being in a fluid state comes to the forefront. Identity is an ever- changing phenomenon. Vidula of the cyber cafe is different from the Vidula as a daughter in an upper middle class Saraswat Brahmin household. The focus of the thesis being on the institution of marriage puts to the front to analyse her as an object to be viewed and gazed at before being informed about the result of her performance on the videos that are being sent to Ashwin for his approval or otherwise. A female is required to hide her private life whereas Ashwin talks about his bohemian way of life unhesitatingly

to Vidula at their first and the only meeting before their marriage. Ashwin carries within his mind that stereotyped image of an Indian woman as an ideal wife, mother and daughter who carries within herself the quintessence of an ideal Indian woman and which can again be interpreted as spirituality. His selection of a girl from a small town like Dharwad ensures him of a companion endowed with purity and innocence. Vidula's brother Rohit fails to acknowledge his affair with the Christian girl and under the pressure of his family marries the girl of her parents' choice. Rohit touches the limits when he feels upset at the way his employer (Pratibha) advises him to stay away from Catherine when Rohit doesn't mind flirting with her in his wife's absence. Rohit not only broke Catherine's heart but is further bent upon enjoying her company as per his requirement. The attitude of men towards women finds an ample explanation in the following quote from the author's introduction to *The Second Sex*,

“He thinks of his body as a direct and normal connection with the world, which he believes he apprehends objectively, whereas he regards the body of woman as a hindrance, a prison, weighed down by everything peculiar to it (Author's Introduction, xlv).”

Vidula's sister Hema has been married abroad for quite a while and she has come to attend her sister's wedding. Hema is insecure about her husband and the play projects her anxiety when she is unable to connect a call to her husband. Hema's identity lurks between her husband and young children. She is equally anxious for her kids. Hema is contended as a house- wife. She accompanied her husband to wherever he gets transferred to. This leaves no scope for Hema to do something useful with her own life. She compares her life in Australia to that of her mother in

India who slogs herself for her family and living for virtually no other reason than to cook and feed the family. Hema finds herself as incapable of handling a professional life at the cost of not being able to attend to her family. Serving her husband and raising a family left her no scope of doing something else in life. Her disapproval of accepting jewellery from her mother is representative of the insignificance of adorning one's body in a foreign land where to make both ends meet is a constant question for the expatriate. A young boy, Vivian takes fancy to her and writes love letters to her. Hema is taken aback at the lack of proprieties by the young boy who hides love letters in the books for Hema. Hema is an object to be fancied upon by this adolescent boy.

Mrs. Nadkarni, mother of Vidula and Hema, belongs to the category of women who spend their entire life tending to their families. She lives for her family. To marry off her daughters is of prime importance for her. She considers herself as incapable of guiding her children but advises her daughter, Vidula not to become a house- wife like her sister Hema and instead do something useful in life. The incident of birth certificate brings the secret hidden regarding Mr. Nadkarni's brother and once again proves the vulnerability of women in a household to the easy and discomfoting gaze of the other male members in the household.

Pratibha, Rohit's employer who is in the production work carries with her a tinge of modernity. She is an independent woman who knows what she wants in life. She is the kind of woman who believes in breaking the stereotypes and living by their own definition of life. According to her girls like Vidula, in a modern world would appear as a fairy tale for the younger generation.

Foucault contends that, "... in every society, the body was in the grip of very strict powers, which imposed on it constraints, prohibitions, or obligations (Foucault, *Discipline* 136). Marriage as an institution is able to control the female body by encroachments on that body through the application of prohibitions and obligations and thereby, constraining that body to experience its uniqueness and wholeness in the day to day lived experience. Such a body became the centre of political struggle lending it an object of use and abuse. The prohibitions and obligations imposed upon the female body are a result of the use of power by those who are authorized.

Poverty stricken Radhabai serves as a domestic help in the household of Nadkarnis in the *Wedding Album*. Radhabai's husband used to extract money out of her earned labour to quench his thirst for drinking. This is a very dark side of a woman's life where she has to toil for the loose habits of her husband. She is unable to take care of her daughter who is forced by her poor circumstances to live as a keep with a wealthy old man. As soon as the old man dies, Radhabai's daughter is thrown out of the house to rot on the streets after being deprived of any rights over the dead man. Radhabai fears that she would lose her job if she tries to help her daughter out. According to Millet, poverty, powerlessness and one's inferior position in society not only lowers one's self-esteem but lands up one as an inferior person (23). The play draws the attention of the reader to the lot of destitute women left on the roads to wander alone, homeless. According to Foucault, "Social differentiation would be affirmed not by the "sexual" quality of the body, but by the intensity of its repression" (Foucault, *History* 1: 129). Low caste and poverty-stricken women are redundant to their impoverished families and are exposed to prostitution and a life of

low social esteem. Radhabai hides in the kitchen, her safe haven, to avoid the sight of her destitute daughter lonely on the roads. Radhabai has to efface her daughter in order to survive in the world. McNay in his book *Gender and Agency: Reconfiguring the Subject in Feminist and Social Theory*, writes about ‘habitus’, a concept used by Pierre Bourdieu which “... expresses the idea that bodily identity is not natural but involves the inscription of dominant social norms or the ‘cultural arbitrary’ upon the body” (McNay 36). Foucault and Bourdieu considered body as the centre of modern strategies of social control. Habitus specifies the workings of the norms on the body as well as determine the actual living experience of the body under those very norms.

Wedding Album represents culture in miniature. The play presents a plethora of different female characters hailing from different social strata of society. The play breaks the delusion about the freedom of women where marriage still seems to form the fulcrum of their existence. Mr. Nadkarni’s words,

MR. NADKARNI. Marriage is a gamble. (89)

indicate, the workings of patriarchy where girls of marriageable age are still considered as a burden on the psyche of her parents. The play breaks down the myth of modern emancipated woman where she still has to follow the dictates of the male members who specify her identity within the circumscribed norms of the institution of marriage.

It is owing to the body and its relationship to the institutions that the subject acquires the identification as an object and the target of being victimised. The dividing practices function as determiners of an identity that is stamped upon the

marginalised. “... the mechanisms of power are addressed to the body ...” (Foucault, *History 1*: 147).

Meenakhshi Thappan in her book *Living the Body: Embodiment, Womanhood and Identity in Contemporary India* studies the practical conditions of the everyday life of women from different sections of society. According to her, our daily lived experience is the marker of our embodiment. Our body lives according to the conditions it is put into. She writes, “Class and caste and nation are therefore not only inscribed on our bodies but also, through our everyday lives ...” (Thappan 9). The female characters in the plays of Girish Karnad are cast in a typical Indian set- up where the body of a female is marked by the cultural ethos of our society and is made to live in accordance with it. Sharmistha’s life in *Yayati* is overshadowed by the fact of her belonging to the rakshasa clan and that is something which decides her course of life. Caste for the Queen in *Bali: The Sacrifice* becomes the bone of contention in her way of life and ultimately at the cost of her life. Continuing with Thappan, she says that a woman’s embodiment is the true repository of purity, sacredness and honour thereby suggesting that in one way or another “the female body needs to be appropriated for a sense of national, racial or community identity to persist” (Thappan 11). In, *The Fire and the Rain*, Vishakha and Nittilai have to remain bound to the ideals of purity, sacredness and honour held in high esteem by the patriarchal set- up and expected to adhere to them. Vishakha fades into insignificance. Nittilai pays it by her death. It is the female body that has to give up her ‘self’ to restore normalcy of a community. The body of the female comes to be associated with the identity of the entire clan or culture that she is a part of. The identity then in the case

of a woman is allied via her body to the culture, institution or a social set-up of which she forms an insignificant part. Thappan does talk of a physical space and a social construction for a woman but according to me such a physical space and a social location is defined and described by the patriarchal norms which is denied to a woman. Even while adhering to such a physical and social space, a woman is conscious of playing an identity which is not acquired but imprinted. The continuation of a woman's objectification circumscribes her life. Our culture is felt to be wavering between, assimilating the changes in the modern world, and confusing it by adhering to the age-old values.

Sridhar Rajeswaran in his research paper "Tying beginnings to ends" (2005) writes that the role assigned to the female characters and the shrinking space they occupy makes us believe that "... gender lacks agency and women have no part to play in the world of cause and effect and in the larger order." (Talwar and Chakraborty 129). The plays under study concern the interplay of mind and body. Desire emanates in the mind and looms large on the body. The identities thus formed are crushed by the thwarted desires. It is this search for identity that has existential reverberations. It must be mentioned here that in *Hayavadana* "... the exchange of heads does not change the person and the bodies respond by their own instinct" (Tandon 20). Devadutta and Kapila revert back to their original situation as regard the physicality of their bodies, thus, making it all the more difficult for Padmini to decide her course of life. The plays remind one of power politics at work in the discursive regime called 'marriage'. A woman's identity is bound by the lack of freedom. Pallavi Gupta in her paper "Split in Identity in Hayavadana" (2016), talks

about Padmini as the archetype of culturally suppressed women who longs for identity (1074). So, to say, a female body has been regarded as the source of pleasure as well as a threat in the collective conscious of patriarchy. In *Nagamandala*, Appanna tries to exercise complete control over Rani's body. Rani surrenders herself completely to the dictates of her husband and shapes her identity as desired by her husband. Under such a subjugated identity, her body experiences the lived experience of being a mere object in the eyes of her husband and the society to which she is questioned upon in the play. The female characters find themselves lost as they search for who they are. In the paper, "Emancipating Women: A Note on Women Empowerment in Girish Karnad's Naga Mandala" (2008), the authors talk about the message of the play that lies in the need for the emancipation of the women who are required to play a significant role in the regeneration of an otherwise de- generate society (Bansal and kumar 158). I agree with Sheila Rowbotham's opinion that "Because some women are privileged does not mean that the liberation of all women is completed" (166). Further, according to Rowbotham, 'emancipation' in India is restricted to the 'most privileged' and that too is 'circumscribed' (205).

Butler's opinion about men as being considered 'persons' and also as the word 'gender' being considered as applicable on women and men as belonging not under the category of gender at all, leads to the discussion of Swastika Munduli's research paper, "Gender Bias Versus Power of Sexuality: A Study of Girish Karnad's Nagamandala" (2015). She writes about the gender inequality between men and women. She says women in Indian culture have no identity of their own. Rani in *Nagamandala* is a victim of "incompleteness" (330-42). I am of the contention that

all the plays under study find the female characters craving for an identity and find themselves in a 'self' that is imposed upon them. There is wide gap between the representation of enslavement and divinity on a woman in our Indian culture. In both these situations, a woman finds her own self lost in a sense of nothingness, trying to locate herself as an individual in her own right. She craves for an individuality that grants her the happiness of fulfilling and living her life up to her desires.

“The body now serves as an instrument or intermediary: if one intervenes upon it to imprison it, or to make it work, it is in order to deprive the individual of liberty that is regarded as both a right and a property (Foucault, *Discipline* 11).

Identity is problematised owing to the subjugation of women resulting in their exclusion. The ruling norms of society set-up impediments in the way of the development of a woman's identity. The gender inequality problematises identity. Karnad's plays under consideration provide ample scope for the identification of this problem. The chapter attempted to look at gender inequality as distorting as well as shaping identities of women in accordance with the set norms and assigning them their specified space in the social set-up. The identity refers not only to the body but also to the soul. When the body undergoes shaping and moulding, the soul also fails to gather up that disintegration. The female characters under study are the discursive sites where the workings of power-relations are found to influence and affect their day to day life. As a result, the identities so formed, are deprived of an individuality and liberty to live which is at once their right as well as possession.

Chapter – 3

Objectification through Discourse: The Silenced “Other”

Michel Foucault defined discourse “... as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements; ...” (Foucault, *Archaeology* 80). It is through discourse that our very being is constituted. We perceive our surroundings through our language. Discourse is much more than a language. And what Foucault called ‘the said as well as the unsaid’ (Foucault, *Archaeology* 25). We develop an understanding of ourselves and others through discourse. The words ‘individualizable group of statements’ refers to those utterances that cater to the interest of assemble of large groups, as in the present thesis, regarding the question of emancipation of women. Foucault’s concept of discourse can be explored from his essay “The Order of Discourse” and his work *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Discourse is the way of organising knowledge that structures the constitution of social relations. Discourse is accompanied by a discursive dialectic which equips discourse with political implications. Subjection in the relations of power is brought about by discourse. The concept of power, then, acquires force and meaning through discourse. This needs an elaboration of the meaning and function of the concept of discourse. Foucault held power as the basis for the constitution of knowledge within the social practices and this is made possible through the agency of discourse. The knowledge referred here is the kind that constitutes the how and why of power relations and the subjectivities inhering within its compass. Foucault was the first to pose the question of relations of power through discourse. Discourse facilitates and

disseminates power. Discourse not only affects and influences power but also gets influenced by power in its own turn. According to him, discourse, power and knowledge are interconnected and as in his words, “It is in discourse that power and knowledge join together” (Foucault, *History* 1: 100). That is why Foucault holds that discourse due to its association with power is dispersed as “discursive elements” (Foucault, *History* 1: 100) and act in a strategic manner just like power. (Foucault, *History* 1: 100)

Discourse stamps the inequalities in relations of power prevalent in the social set-up. Foucault designated discourse as “... a set of regulated practice...” (Foucault, *Archaeology* 80) which include expressions pertaining to all spheres. The regulation or control of discourses refers to the rules that form a part within a particular culture. Foucault was more interested in the way discourse was seen as a regulated practice and hence, his enumeration of those very prohibitions forms a considerable part of his discussion on discourse. As understood from his words, “... that in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events ... (Young 52).”

As the notion of exclusion was recurrent in his oeuvre, it is very much visible in his concept of discourse and finds an ample treatment at the way it gets marked by the regulations or prohibitions. The discrimination wrapped up in language interested Foucault. The rules pertaining to the usage of discourse transformed objects undergoing discrimination into an order of signification. He describes the external and internal procedures associated with such regulations. The external procedures

include taboo, the difference between true and false and the speech between the normal and the abnormal. The internal procedures include rarefaction. Rarefaction is the right to speak by way of authority. The speech is enclosed around what Foucault termed as ritual (Young 62). A ritual is a confession that again unfurls in the power relations. A further understanding of the term discourse is facilitated by the use of such terms by Foucault as episteme, archive, discursive formation and statement.

Foucault also mentions discourse as being carried in groups, as in the present context the discourse on patriarchy that is visible in the framework of the plays. He states that,

Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also an hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy (Foucault, *History I*: 100-101).

The definition clearly refers to the control advocated by relations of power on the general mode of expression and its proximity to silence. Discourse controlled by power is nothing different from silence. Silence is a form of power. The definition also refers to the complex nature of discourse that brings about relations of power and gets affected by such relations in its own turn. It is through the impact of dominant discourses that the inequalities in relations of power prevail in our society. Dominant discourses are discourses full of power.

The Archaeology of Knowledge describes discourses as practices specified in the element of the archive (131). An archive is defined as the general system of the

formation and transformation of statements (130). Archive reveals those rules of a practice that enables certain statements to survive while some others to undergo modifications. Archives are the “systems that establishes statements as events (with the conditions and domain of appearance) and things (with their own possibility and field of use)” (Foucault, *Archaeology* 128). Such statements are the discourses. The system as well as, the statements emanating from that system, are saturated with power. Discourse has a social implication since it deals with the statements uttered by people who are socially related to each other. Relations of power exist between the individuals who form a part of a social set up. Discourse acts as the ground for the formulations of the relations of power and for their furtherance. We are not unaware of the inequalities in relations of power and those of which are sanctioned by discourse in those very disproportionate relations of power.

According to Foucault, discourse works through the institutionalisation of power. An institution and the discourses emanating through it act as the apparatus for the very basis of the inequalities in the relations of power. The mode of exclusion is employed to restrict the circulation of statements. The exclusion associated with discourse finds its connections with power. A literary text gives representation to such images as established through relations of power in a social milieu. These images are naturalised and form a part of our daily practices in their entirety with the passage of time. The impact of these images is realised on the social set up through the installation and workings of social institutions which act as a medium and a manifestation of control. The rationale of exclusion is established through the relations of power as a dictum over the ones who are subjugated through the mode of ‘dividing practices’ (Foucault, *Essential* 126). A lending of specificity to discourses

helps them maintain control through the structures of power in society over the subordinates and the marginalised.

Foucault writes in *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: I* “Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines it and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it (Foucault, *History 1*: 101). This means that where discourse causes and supports the proliferation of power, it also, in the course of time, sets up the possibility of overthrowing that very power.

Foucault uses the term ‘ritual’ in his essay *The Order of Discourse*. “Ritual defines the qualification which must be possessed by individuals who speak ... (62)”. When a discourse comes to be associated with power, the right to speak also gets circumscribed. Not everyone has the right to speak and that too under any circumstances. This is because those in power create the ‘dominant discourses’ that is the one who has the right to speak and who is meant to be heard. A dominant discourse is the one that becomes an accepted way of looking at the subject.

The Foucauldian term ‘exclusion’ can here gather its meaning from a set of regulated statements which have a restricted circulation. It is as a result of exclusion that a certain group of individuals lose their right to speak and if at all they speak, their words carry no significance. Discourse not only sets our limits with the outside world but also informs our way of thinking. We start perceiving ourselves in relation to the outside world with respect to the kind of conditioning that we acquire through discourse. Discourse functions within a context and its social implications saturate our thinking.

Foucault points to the relationship between language and knowledge. He points as to how certain statements have the value of truth. Foucault talks about the 'regime of truth' (Foucault, *Power* 131) that is "... the ensemble of rules according to which the true and the false are separated and specific effects of power attached to the true, ..." (Foucault, *Essential* 317). Truth is explained by Foucault as knowledge and also as an awareness of power and its shaping in accordance with the prevalent forms of truth that knowledge is able to equip power with. He talks about the constraints on the production of discourse about objects of knowledge and the effect of discursive practices on social action; and the uses of discourse to exercise power. Foucault terms it as "political economy" (Foucault, *Essential* 316) as he affirms that truth is "... subject to economic and political incitement; ..." (Foucault, *Essential* 316). One cannot just speak everything in any circumstances. Exclusion is well known to many societies. Discourse is the ground for the struggle. Truth is differentiated from falsity in an urge to know. The will to know gets affected by the distinction between the truth and falsity. Truth is associated with the apparatus whose authority it claims. A woman has to conduct herself according to the structures associated with the apparatus.

Discourse is regulated by social practices. Everyone does not have the right to speak anything. The circumstances pertaining to one's social situation determines the regulations imposed upon an individual. An individual is recognised by the extent to which his words carry currency. The speech of the excluded is bound to fall into a void. Discourse plays the route where the concentration of power comes to lie in a few hands.

Discourse as propounded by Foucault goes beyond the thinking in order to produce meaning. The objectification through discourse takes place through the agency of the institutions which traps an individual by administering a total control over them. Foucault divides discourse into truth and falsity. Truth is the result of discursive practices that emerge out of the language itself. The representation of truth in the plays can be analysed by the language employed by the female and the male characters. It is in the use of language that relations in any society reflect their way of thinking that has become an irreplaceable part of their lives. Language not only defines the limits prescribed for an individual but it is through language that an individual's very being is realised in social relations.

According to Foucault, the will to truth is facilitated by the institutions and various practices prevalent in the society which bear the mark of exclusion. The will to truth is also enforced in the way knowledge is put to use in a society. Foucault also held that the will to truth draws its support from institutions that exert pressure and constraint on the discourses of the excluded or the marginalised. It is this will to truth that comes to be accepted as a way of thinking.

Foucault considered internal procedures also to influence discourse, "... exercise a control on itself ..." (Young 56), that is to say, a discourse undermines its own functioning. Rarefaction or the authoritative use of language by those who are in power or as a consequence of influential social standing wields power to them through the workings of social institutions.

We understand our body through discourse because it is discourse in our everyday life that fashions our way of perceiving and acting upon things. Discourse

shapes reality for us. It is through the social institutions that discourse gains its authority. Discourse structures the very system that an individual lives- with and becomes a part of it.

Judith Butler in the introduction to her work *Gender Trouble* talks about the heterosexual framework within which a woman's existence is circumscribed (Butler, Preface xi). A woman's role is defined within the precincts of that framework and she cannot even start thinking of moving out of this framework, for moving out would then mean, losing sense of being what she has been assigned with, according to the norms of the cultural set- up that she too inhabits. A woman loses the significance of the pronoun 'I' (Butler, *Gender* Preface xxvi) because the very language that structures her being also curbs her from using this pronoun. It is not just a curb on the use of the pronoun 'I' (Butler, Preface, xxvi) rather it also signifies the limitations upon the use of language for women. This is exactly what Foucault refers to in his definition of the word discourse where it is regulated as well as selected in its use. This is where the dominant discourses come to figure in our cultural set- up. It is the dominant discourse that brings about the silence that has been ascribed to women in a society. A woman is not only the other but also ascribed with a veiled existence in society. Butler in *Gender Trouble* also talked about speech as a bodily-act that had definite consequences for the speaker (Butler, Preface xxvii). This subjection to silence this curb on the existence of 'I' for a woman and the consequences that a woman's voice leads her to is nothing else but her objectification through discourse. As has been established in the preceding chapter, a woman has no self but only an existence imposed upon her and that too, a silenced existence of the silenced other. Fadyl, Nicholls and McPherson in their paper, "Interrogating

Discourse: The Application of Foucault's Methodological Discussion to Specific Inquiry" (2013), state that "... through discourse various objects are formed and rendered manifest such that we can think of, speak of and act upon them "(9). They also state that the discourse not only articulates but also as a result of its effects, produces "actions, structures, social conditions and so on" (4). Just as there is an object that is produced by discourse, likewise, these authors state that there are "spaces and situations where an object emerges as manifest and nameable" (9). In the context of the present thesis, the space refers to household, marriage, and society.

The plays under study voice the oppression of women in our society as a result of the workings of the patriarchal system. A close analysis of the text of the plays under consideration shows discourse in the form of various utterances limiting the lives of the female characters and moulding the same according to certain set, regulated social practices. Foucault contended that discourses are contained in the texts. The female characters in the plays of Girish Karnad, under study, can be categorised as conformist and non- conformist but a close analysis indicate the life lived by them according to the standards determined according to the definition of an Indian woman. Such a definition points to the life lived under prohibitions. It is through discourse that a particular space is specified to the women in a cultural set-up. A woman's life is made stagnant through the discourse of silence. They long for a freedom which the men enjoy within that very set- up. The right to utter the moorings of her heart is denied to a woman. The discourse of marginality and subjugation looms large on women in our society and this is exactly the picture that the beginnings of the plays portray. Girish Karnad, as a writer, never aimed at any propaganda in his plays. His plays woven out of borrowed stories pertaining to myth,

folktale or history, simply presented the situation of our cultural ethos that matched with the existing contemporary life. As stated by Foucault “The author function is therefore characteristic of the mode of existence, circulation, and functioning of certain discourses within a society” (Foucault *Essential* 382). Everything in his plays is put before the audience to see and perceive. According to Zoe Garity, in his paper “Discourse Analysis: Foucault and Social Work Research” (2010), a statement is the basic element and a text is comprised of statements and he adds that a statement is the basic unit of discourse. Garity also adds that the practices expressed by discourse as truths are discussed by texts. The plays under study offer a visible context to analyse discourse and the social practices associated with discourse. The object of discourse is the silence that the female characters are subjected to. The dialogues spoken by the female characters and the dialogues meant to be spoken to them, offer an ample context for the analysis of discourse as a means for the objectification of women. His plays, no doubt, reflect a vision to the audience about what is to be learnt and what is to be left out from the traditional values. The plays point towards the fact how women come to recognise themselves as marginalised or weak. As pointed out in the post by Rachel Adams titled as “Critical Legal Thinking- Law and the Political” (2017), a discourse has material effects and it produces practices which are accepted as a social fact and that discourses are produced by effects of power. I can say that, realizing oneself as marginalised and the one who has been excluded is how a discourse produces it as a social reality and an accepted way of practices.

Discourse builds up and lends legitimacy to unequal relations of power. Foucault considered discourses not as signs but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak (Foucault, *Archaeology* 49). Discourse worked its

way through the institutional structures that gave power to the category that it authorised. Those in power retain their control over the subjugated through the creation and control over the particular discourses. In the case of the plays under study, it is the discourse of male supremacy through the authority of the patriarchal framework that the female characters are put to silence by way of their objectification to mute lifeless beings. The plays offer a discerning site upon an analysis wherein male characters endeavour to hold their tight control over the female characters by their utterances. Such utterances which in the Foucauldian sense are termed as ‘regime of truth’ (Foucault, *Power* 30), meant authority and acceptability in the society. The institution of marriage in the context of the plays under study plays havoc in the lives of the female characters by denying them the basic right to express their hopes and desires. This chapter is an attempt to foreground the reasons for the lack of emancipation for women when they cannot make their voices heard in the relations of power due to gender politics. As pointed by Krishna Singh in his paper, “Postcolonial Subalternization in the Plays of Girish Karnad” (2011) designates the word subaltern (sub means under and alter means other) to women who face alienation, subordination, subjugation and resilience and he adds that they have no place as human beings in a cultural set-up (1-12).

Yayati is a play based on the Mahabharata. The play establishes patriarchy as a strong determinant of the hold of male supremacy in Indian culture. In *Yayati*, relations of power are determined by discourse. One is qualified to speak if one fulfils the norms set by those in authority. Sharmistha, the tribal princess, brought as a slave in the palace of King Yayati is much detested by each and everyone in the palace. Her exclusion is visible in the words of almost every character in the play.

The utterances made for her speak volumes about the hatred that every person in the palace has for her. Even a maid servant, Swarnalata speaks poison for Sharmistha. Her words 'That spiteful whore' (1.7) sets the tone of the play and matter of discord in the very beginnings of the play. This is a natural consequence of patriarchy that a woman hates another woman in the desire to impose those very rules on women, which she is made to obey, on those who are below her status. Swarnalata, being Devayani's maid, finds herself authorised to speak ill of Sharmistha in order to please her mistress. Swarnalata's speech almost draws a very sharp picture of Sharmistha in the eyes of the reader. It is through Swarnalata that we come to know that Sharmistha was once very close friend of Devayani and presently her slave. Swarnalata warns Devayani about the need to be wary of Sharmistha. Infact, Swarnalata has a very complete understanding of Sharmistha which are visible in her words,

SWARNALATA. ... she can become an addiction. You may begin to need her more than she needs you. (1.8)

At this point of time when Devayani reproaches Swarnalata for speaking beyond her limits, Swarnalata herself is reminded of the impact that words had on her own life because of which her husband deserted her. Swarnalata also tells Devayani to be careful of Sharmistha's ability to play with dangers and how she can be the reason of pain for others without affecting herself. Sharmistha lives in the palace but no inmates talk to her in the palace. She gathers from the talk of others that Prince Pooru is returning to the palace and there is to be a celebration. It is here in the very beginnings that the talk between Devayani and Swarnalata and then between Devayani and Sharmistha determine the relations of power, as a part of patriarchal

norms, between them. Devayani, as a result, fails to make the arrangements for Pooru's arrival. Sharmistha's words that even a prostitute is asked her name hits hard on Devayani and she indulges in an argument with King Yayati as the latter enters her quarter. It is during this argument that King Yayati's description of Sharmistha is felt in words uttered by him.

YAYATI. Surely it is that accursed creature, the deranged witch rampaging
around in the palace grounds. (1.15)

It is King Yayati, who as a male authority, determines norms for everyone inside the precincts of the palace and it is he, who has formed his preconceived notions about the tribal princess as a part of his experience with his earlier tribal wife, Pooru's mother who went insane. King Yayati finds it not as fit to talk to a woman like Sharmistha.

YAYATI. ...It is not proper that I am seen conversing with – someone like
you. (1.16)

It is the male authority who possesses the sole right to determine what kind of a woman is fit for them to converse with. King Yayati's words to Sharmistha,

YAYATI. Different manners, customs. An unfamiliar way of life. (1.16)

The words depict the kind of life that Sharmistha had in the forest amongst her own people and also the kind of an outcast that she is considered in the palace.

The institution of patriarchy hits hard on Sharmistha, Devayani, Chitrlekha and Swarnalata. Language uttered in the form of statements by the male characters, prove the role it plays in making the life of women as ruthless as possible.

Sharmistha is given away by her father as a slave to Devayani and spend the rest of her life in King Yayati's palace without even being asked if it suited her or not. Sharmistha is made Devayani's slave without either of them wanting it to be that way. Sharmistha's words, "My father has given her father his word that I shall be her slave." (1.17) prove beyond doubt that a woman is not considered worth even asking if she would be able to live the life that has been imposed upon her. Sharmistha in her turn gives the similar words to her father agreeing to whatever he desired his daughter to do.

Women were trained to speak as discerned from Sharmistha's answer to the King about the sharp tongue she uses in the palace.

YAYATI (defeated). Are you happy even in this hell you are creating?

SHARMISTHA. I could have spewed nectar. But we leave those things to namby-pamby Brahmin girls. I am a rakshasa woman. We have our code. (1.17)

According to Sharmistha, rakshasa women are born with a bitter tongue although this doesn't seem to be the truth otherwise, she could have easily argued with her father for not sending her as a slave to the palace. She says this just as against her whim to be compared to other women in the palace who behave according to the norms set for them. This is exactly why after this Yayati charges her of this,

YAYATI. What code? You are from a royal family. Where is your self-respect? Your dignity-the obligation to be a princess that you owe your family? You behave like a cheap harridan. (1.17)

Women in society are expected to behave even in the use of the words and the words which carry currency are determined according to the patriarchal norms. Sharmistha ascribes the rough use of words to her objectification into “A domesticated animal” (1.17) and her exclusion from a tribal princess to that of a “slave” (1.17). Sharmistha admonishes King Yayati to listen to her and rightly tells him,

SHARMISTHA. I am a princess by birth. I have a right to be heard. (1.18)

Sharmistha had to literally plead before the King to prove her point. It is due to the fact that she, owing to her tribal origins, is someone unwelcomed in a polite society. Whatever Sharmistha has to explain in her favour cannot be stamped as truth in the eyes of King Yayati because Sharmistha’s exclusion takes away the right for her to speak and if heard is let go off as falsity.

Devayani is able to catch Sharmistha hidden behind the curtains. She senses danger to her marriage and so, she grants freedom to Sharmistha. Devayani is very well aware of what might have happened between the King and Sharmistha. Devayani’s use of the words “These are royal orders” (2.28) for releasing Sharmistha from her bondage, are of no consequence as the King uses his male authority to administer control over the releasing orders for Sharmistha and the reason being obvious that the King takes a fancy to the slave princess and would not let her go free. It comes off as a shock for Devayani, the royal queen to hear the King announce Sharmistha as not another concubine but his royal consort. The King holds Sharmistha by her arm and urges her to confess her happiness for being chosen as queen but Sharmistha wants him to set her free. Devayani is shocked at the way the

King holds Sharmistha as she expresses these words, “Let go of her, sir. Does my being here mean nothing to you?” (2.29) These words clearly show Devayani’s helplessness as a woman and even as a queen to be of no significance in forbidding the King to do what he is upto. The king on his part tries to assure Devayani of putting Sharmishtha in a separate residence and his words should be marked here, “I shall ensure that she does not impinge on your life for one fleeting moment” (2.29). The King here is not only trying to take a forceful charge over Sharmishtha’s life but also assures to contain the struggle between Sharmistha and Devayani on his own and without even being asked to do so. Devayani’s takes it as a direct impingement to her honour to have her slave as her equal. But this is what a woman had to take in her good stead in the unsaid norms of patriarchy that she is unable to counter the decisions taken by her husband even when those decisions prove fatal and the man is able to accomplish the wrong acts that he had by chance taken fancy to. The King has been bewitched by Sharmistha’s account of how she loved Devayani and was later spurned by her on account of the change of clothes between them while bathing in the river. Sharmistha’s tongue is brought to rest by the King’s decision to marry her whereby she has too blindly followed her husband. Devayani on her part finds her life futile and takes off every piece of jewellery that adorns her body. Devayani curses herself for what she is not responsible in the real sense of the word.

DEVAYANI. Her words, “It’s all my fault, I know, I am to blame for everything. It is just that I am unworthy of this palace...” (2.32)

The insults hurled on Devayani and Sharmistha in a normal routine for any male in a patriarchal set- up because women are made to live the way a man wants them to and they are not even listened to whether what they have wished for it or not.

Sage Shukracharya curses King Yayati to old age when his daughter informs him about the King's decision to marry Devayani's slave. King Yayati on his part puts the entire blame on Sharmistha for enticing him and completely forgets his authoritative declaration to Devayani about marrying Sharmistha.

YAYATI. ...You she- devil! You are the cause of all this. You are responsible. You trapped me with your wiles. (2.42)

It is very easy for men like Yayati to put the blame for their own weaknesses and failings on women. She is the same Sharmistha that the King was enamoured of and would not let her leave his palace and now that very Sharmistha is called an "outsider" (42) by him. A woman is recognised in society through the perceptions of men and how the words uttered by them can bring a sea change at the way the society looks on women. Sharmistha's words are full of wisdom but not for the King because he considers women as lacking in wisdom and decision making.

SHARMISTHA. ... But there are things far important. Let us go and seek them in solitude. (2.43)

King Yayati does not listen to her advice of not throwing his curse on his son Pooru. The king is enraged at this suggestion of Sharmistha and is put to silence by these words

YAYATI. You be quiet. This conniving barbarian. (2.46)

The King is ready to marry Sharmistha for the sheer fact of enjoying her company but for him she will always remain an outsider and a Rakshasi as earlier Pooru's mother was for him.

King Yayati's son, Pooru who has returned with his newly-wed wife does no good to her. His opinion about his wife, Chitrlekha, and the way he opens them to his father shows the chauvinistic attitude of a man towards a woman.

POORU. ... From her birth, she has been groomed for this moment and when it arrives, what does she find? (2.37)

POORU. I want to have a son so she will have no grumble against me. Nor will any one else. I can place him in her arms, under your tender care and leave. He can take after his ancestors. (2.37)

Pooru's words point towards the preconceived notions of a man about how a woman is brought up with the aim to fit the requirements of a man. A woman's role is predestined by the ruling norms of the patriarchal set-up. Pooru had already decided to renounce his worldly life after giving a son to his wife and kingdom. Chitrlekha is at this stage, unaware that she would be deserted and made to live on her own soon after her dream wedding.

Pooru designates himself with, "A half-caste. A mongrel." (2.40).

He told this in an answer to his father when King Yayati tells him about his mother who was from a rakshasha clan and who went insane and died. King Yayati does not mince his words in belittling Pooru's mother and making Pooru realise that he does not have pure Bharata lineage and does not trust his rakshasa blood. Pooru utters the words "polluted blood" which King Yayati does not find fit to mention about the latter and the polluted blood happens to be because of his mother who had tribal lineage.

Pooru takes upon his father's curse leaving his wife, Chitrlekha in the lurch. Chitrlekha was well aware about the curse and her words, "Their problems are mine too" (4.53) point towards the steadfastness of a woman's adaptability as well adjusting nature in her new house after marriage. Swarnalata asks her to cry when she breaks the news of Pooru taking his father's curse upon himself as women are held to be weak and submissive.

SWARNALATA. Cry, madam, please. Don't hold back your tears. Nothing is more harmful than suppressed tears. (4.55)

CHITRALEKHA. Cry? Why should I cry? (4.55)

Chitrlekha is not able to be courageous for long because the very moment she looks at the old wrinkled face of her husband scares her of.

CHITRALEKHA. I will not let my husband step back into my bedroom unless he returns a young man. (4.61)

YAYATI. ...Now act in a manner worthy of an Anga princess and Bharata queen. Act so that generations to come may sing your glory and Pooru's ... I was panic-stricken lest you the names of both our families into disrepute... (4.61)

YAYATI. Hold your tongue! You dare indulge in levity about your husband's death? (4.62)

The curse of King Yayati is ultimately thrown on Sharmistha and Chitrlekha for both the women suffer for the error they never committed. Devayani on her part

is forced to plead to her father for help when the King fails to control his lust for Devayani's slave. Sharmistha and Chitrlekha are put to silence by the King. Swarnalata "decks herself as a married woman" (4.60) for the mistake she never committed. Swarnalata suffers in silence. All of the women characters in the play suffer for the image that the discourses on patriarchy, impels them to acquire.

In *Nagamandala* Rani is imprisoned by her husband Appanna in their own house. Appanna has nothing substantial to talk to his newly-wed wife whom he considers unfit for his company. When Rani pleads with him not to leave her alone as she feels scared at night, Appanna is not interested even in listening to her.

APPANNA. Look, I don't like idle chatter. Do as you are told, you understand? (1.28)

This is how he forces Rani into submission by refusing to even talk or listen to her. Power is implemented through discourse. A man has the authority to tell a woman to shut her mouth till she is required to speak. It is through Kurudavva that we are informed about Appanna's whereabouts outside his house.

KURUDAVVA. Besides, I haven't slept a wink since you told me you saw Appanna in his concubine's courtyard. He has got himself a bride- and he still goes after that harlot? (1.29)

Kurudavva's son Kappanna asks a question,

KAPPANNA. Mother, what does it mean when a man locks his wife in?
(1.30)

KURUDAVVA. You tell me. (1.30)

KAPPANNA. It means he does not want anyone to talk to his wife. (1.30)

Restrain on his words employed by Appanna is meant to use words to exercise power on Rani. It is the restricted use of words by Appanna that he is able to exclude Rani from sharing his life in a marriage. Women like Rani are excluded from the life of men by the kind of discourses that are hurled on them to keep them at bay in a marriage.

KURUDAVVA. What is your name? (1.31)

RANI. They call me Rani. (1.31)

KURUDAVVA. Where is Appanna? (1.31)

RANI. I don't know. (1.31)

KURUDAVVA. When did he go out? (1.31)

RANI. After lunch yesterday. (1.31)

KURUDAVVA. When will he come back? (1.31)

RANI. He will be back for lunch later in the day. (1.31)

Rani has no idea about the whereabouts of her husband. She has been objectified as a 'caged bird' (30) who is not allowed to move beyond the space allotted to her. It is this 'caged bird' who is expected to get the lunch ready the moment her husband comes to eat and leave without bothering to have anything to do with her.

Kurrudavva is caught by Appanna outside his house talking to Rani from the open window.

APPANNA. What are you doing here? (1.34)

KURUDAVVA. I heard you brought a new bride.... But she refuses to come out. (1.34)

APPANNA. She won't talk to anyone. And no one need talk to her. (1.34)

It is not basically the right to smile, laugh and chatter with her husband that is denied to Rani but also her social ostracism is also made sure of by Appanna. He plans to keep a watch dog outside her house in order to make sure that no one talks to Rani.

APPANNA. Rani, where have you been? I said, where have you been ? Rani, answer me! (1.38)

Appanna is unable to find Rani in the house as the poor girl had gone to empty the curry containing magical root in the anthill nearby. It is not expected of her to cross the doors of her house. Appanna slaps her as soon as he finds her coming inside from the front door.

The words employed by Appanna, Kurudavva and Kappanna for Rani presents before the reader, a picture of a woman as a destitute in the patriarchal set-up where she is expected to alter her way of talking and behaviour according to the norms set for her in accordance with the whims and caprices of the man she lives in submission to.

Appanna's form is taken by the King Cobra as Rani's curry with the magical root is consumed by it. The Naga in the physical form of Appanna lands Rani into confusion. The Naga is very affectionate in dealing with Rani. This is not something that Rani has been used to. Appanna's illtreatment of her has become a part of her daily routine. The Naga's affection is taken as yet another dream by her. The pungent words which her husband uses for her becomes her reality that she finds and faces in her day to day life.

RANI. I must have been dreaming again. (2.41)

RANI. ... Spending the whole day by myself is rotting my brain. (2.42)

The love and attention that Rani is able to get from the Naga is hard for her to believe. Appanna's illtreatment is something Rani has got used to and takes as an irreplaceable part of her life. It seems to her that her loneliness in the house must be making her mad as the poor girl is unable to come to terms with the two opposite sides of Appanna.

RANI. Who am I to tell you that? It's your house. Your pleasure. (2.42)

Rani tells this to the Naga when the latter asks her if he should stop coming. Her words are a reminder to the fact that a woman spends a lifetime tending to the house of the man that she is married to but is never able to call that house as her own.

RANI. Goodness! Goats have to be sacrificed and buffaloes slaughtered to get a word out of you in the mornings. But at night- how you talk! ...
(2.45)

Rani is here talking about the reserve in the use of words that Appanna gets her used to. She never questions the Naga as well as Appanna during the day time. Even the wounded Naga and the wound free Appanna during the day does not arouse her curiosity as the questioning capacity of Rani is put to rest by the do's and dont's impressed on her from the start. Rani is confused by Appanna's dual behaviour.

RANI. I was afraid you might not do anything of sort. That's why I hid the news from you all these months ... (2.50)

This is a real testing situation for Rani because she is asked to conceal her pregnancy till was possible as directed by the Naga. Rani fails to comprehend the situation although what she understands is that she has to remain silent till she can.

RANI. I know. Don't ask questions. Do as I say. (2.51)

This is something that has been ingrained in her mind ever since she got married to Appanna.

RANI. What shall I do? Shall I have an abortion? (2.52)

NAGA. I have to go. (2.52)

APPANNA. Aren't you ashamed to admit it, you harlot? I locked you in and yet you managed to find a lover! ... (2.52)

RANI. Oh my God! A snake! A cobra! (2.52)

RANI. Why are you humiliating me like this? (2.53)

Rani finds herself in a difficult situation. After her pregnancy, Rani is left alone as she has to face the truth of the child's father. Appanna spurns her like never

before. He is not ready to accept her anymore. Naga, on his part, tries to convince Rani to face the village elders where Appanna intends to take her on account of the pregnancy which Appanna claims to have nothing to do with.

RANI. What truth? Shall I say my husband forgets his nights by next morning? (2.53)

NAGA. Say anything. But you must speak the truth. (2.54)

RANI. And if I lie? (2.54)

NAGA. It will bite you. (2.55)

ELDER II. It brings no credit to the village to have a husband publicly to question his wife's chastity. (2.55)

ELDER I. ... Accept your guilt. We shall then go on to consider the punishment. (2.56)

ELDER I. Appanna, your wife is not an ordinary woman. She is a goddess incarnate... (2.59)

Rani is baffled at the double behaviour of her husband. She fails to understand the difference between truth and falsity. Rani expresses her faith in the Naga's words. The incidents of a man publically humiliating his wife, is not anything new to an Indian set- up. Whereas a husband's prime duty is to show a certain kind of demeanour for his wife in public, Appanna is bent upon publicising and debilitating his wife's stature in front of the entire village. As for the elders, they openly announce that Appanna has never touched his wife and yet she conceived a child. Nobody questions Appanna for refusing to treat his wife the way he should

have. Every question is meant for Rani because she is the one who as a woman has been assigned the work of upholding ethical values rightly in accordance with the strict norms of patriarchal set-up.

The play *Hayavadana* has the female character of Padmini who is married to Devadutta. Padmini is the one who falls out of the conventional framework according to the discourse of patriarchy. Devadutta describes her as “The Shyama Nayika” (85) and is bewitched by her beauty. Devadutta is very well aware of her as someone beyond his reach but is bent upon marrying her. Even Kapila agrees after looking at Padmini that she is not for men like Devadutta. It is Devadutta who decides the fate of Padmini even when she had not married him. Devadutta takes a vow to sacrifice his two arms to the goddess Kali and his head to Lord Rudra if Padmini agreed to marry him. This decision proves a major turning point in the lives of the two friends along with Padmini. Padmini as well as Kapila find themselves lost in a situation created by Devadutta for them. Devadutta also commits the folly of sending Kapila to Padmini’s house to suggest the marriage proposal. Kapila on his part finds himself mesmerized by Padmini’s beauty that he wilfully asks Padmini’s permission if he could touch her feet. This is something very unusual for Padmini as she knows that it is she, a woman, who is required to touch everyone’s feet.

DEVADUTTA. You’ve no sense of what not to say. So long as you can chatter and run around like a child... (1.91)

PADMINI. (Back at the window) Where is Kapila? (1.91)

DEVADUTTA. ... and drool over Kapila all day. (1.91)

PADMINI. What do you mean? (1.91)

PADMINI. ... He was your friend even before you married me, wasn't he? He used to drop in every day even then ... (1.91)

PADMINI. ...The trouble is I grew up saying these awful things and it's become a habit now... (1.92)

Devadutta completely rejects Padmini's way of talking and stops her from uttering anything un-necessarily. He completely forgets his own sense of what to say and what not to say while giving a promise to the goddess Kali to sacrifice his limbs. He never makes Padmini aware of this fact before marriage and takes her for granted. Devadutta holds a very low opinion about his wife when it comes to using her intellect. He is also apprehensive of his wife paying extra attention to his friend Kapila.

KAPILA. You are slipping, boy, control yourself. Don't lose that hold. (1.94)

Kapila is very well aware of Padmini being his best friend's wife but he does not attempt to control himself in following her around. Padmini has just to open her mouth and Kapila obeys her unconditionally. He takes Padmini's words of praise for him quiet seriously. Padmini commits the blunder of comparing Devadutta and Kapila and finds Devadutta lacking. Her words clearly express this.

PADMINI. How beautifully you drive the cart, Kapila! Your hands don't even move, but the oxen seem to know exactly where to go. (1.95)

PADMINI. ... Devadutta took me in a cart... The oxen took everything except the road. (1.96)

PADMINI. He is a celestial being born as a hunter...How his body sways, his limbs curve – it's a dance almost. (1.96)

DEVADUTTA. No woman could resist him... (1.96)

The incident of Kapila fetching a flower for Padmini to see brings to the forefront the effects of words shared between Padmini and Kapila on Devadutta in determining the leanings of Padmini towards Kapila. His words, "Look how she's pouring her soul in his mould" (96), shows Devadutta's estimate of Padmini with respect to Kapila. He finds Kapila attractive enough for any woman to resist him. It is only after Kapila finds Devadutta lying dead in the Kali temple that he is able to utter the truth, "I did wrong" (100).

KAPILA. I mean Padmini must come home with me, shouldn't she? She's my wife, so she must... (1.106)

PADMINI: What are you talking of, Kapila?

KAPILA: ... I have Devadutta's body now. So you have to be my wife...

DEVADUTTA: ... According to the Shastras, the head is the sign of a man...

KAPILA: I know it is. But that doesn't mean she can just go and live with a man who's not her husband. That's not right. (108)

PADMINI: ... It is my duty to go with Devadutta. But remember I'm going with your body.

The above dialogues between the three show the conflict in their lives. These words also show the objectification of Padmini who is treated as a commodity to be

grabbed by either Kapila or Devadutta. Both of them are very selfish in declaring their right over Padmini after their heads gets exchanged. It is for both the male characters to decide as to whom Padmini really belongs to after the heads of both men gets switched over.

PADMINI: What a wide chest. What other canopy do I need? (2.111)

DEVADUTTA: My soft, swaying Padmini. What other swing do I want?
(2.111)

Padmini's words are a clear reminder that how a woman has been taught by the unwritten norms in patriarchy that she has to spend her life under the shelter of a man. The word, 'canopy', is used by Padmini for the virile body of the man with Devadutta's face. The word 'soft' indicates weakness of a woman's body. Ever since after taking up Kapila's body, Devadutta indulged in physical acts like wrestling. Devadutta, as a man, does not find any inhibitions in behaving physically the way Kapila used to. He knows he will be able to avert the eyes of people. But Padmini, as a woman is apprehensive of being caught at any point of time for that very reason. She keeps on warning Devadutta about involving too much in public display of his strength and virility.

PADMINI. What if it's cold? He's older now... (2.116)

DEVADUTTA. No, it's unnecessary trouble for everyone. (2.116)

Padmini intention to take her son towards the forest and lake was dismissed by Devadutta as he thought it fit not to expose the small child to cold water in the lake.

DEVADUTTA. It was fun the first few days because it was new... I have the family tradition to maintain- the daily reading, writing and studies... (2.116)

PADMINI. ... Devadutta changes, Kapila changes. And me? (2.119)

Padmini forces Devadutta to go to the Ujjain fair to bring dolls for their son.

PADMINI. The wrong road stuck to my feet- wouldn't let go. (2.123)

KAPILA. Is that your son? (2.123)

PADMINI. Yes.And yours. (2.123)

PADMINI. Your body gave him to me. (2.123)

PADMINI. The head always wins. (124)

Out of the conflict of the head and the body, Devadutta and Kapila are able to steer forth their lives and it is Padmini, who is unable to figure out her life out of this confusion. Padmini had a reason to go to meet Kapila in the forest. She is convinced that it is Kapila who has Devadutta's body that accounted for her child's birth.

DEVADUTTA. Amazing! Even a man like me found the road hard. But how quickly she covered it- with a child in her arms. (2.128)

PADMINI. They burned, lived, fought, embraced and died. I stood silent. (2.130)

Padmini stood in disfavour of both the men. Devadutta could never understand the dark moorings of her heart. Devadutta desired her and married her but

would never change for her. Kapila wanted her from the depths of his heart but would not openly declare it in front of Devadatta for the fear of hurting his friend.

PADMINI. Nothing. I often remember it. It's almost my autobiography now,
 Kapila! Devadatta! Kapila with Devadatta's body! Devadatta with
 Kapila's body! Four men in one life time (2.125)

Padmini is eventually full of remorse towards the end when both Devadatta and Kapila fight with each other till death. She finds herself as living with four men at different intervals of time. The play is an invocation to the angst of a woman who is unable to take control of such desires that fall out of the dictates of patriarchy. Her silence in the form of a pyre burnt upon that of Devadatta's, lands her as an outcaste with no recognition in a male world. As rightly pointed out by Bhagwata,

BHAGWATA. ... India is known for its pativratas-... no pativrata went in the
 way Padmini did ... (2.132)

The Fire and the Rain resonates yet again the discourse on patriarchy. The two female characters are put to silence by the norms of a male dominated society. Their hopes, aspirations and desires are not regarded as of any considerable worth. The very fact of silent withdrawal of Vishakha's character reveal the fact of uncertainty and insignificance attached to the lot of women in a male dominated society. Vishakha, left to herself by her husband, Paravasu, is stopped by Yavakri on her way to the hermitage carrying a pot of water.

VISHAKHA. My father- in- law will be back tomorrow. Speak to him then.
 (1.118)

VISHAKHA. I am a married woman. (1.118)

Vishakha is obeying the social practices where the right to speak lies with the male members of the family. Women are prohibited from talking to the strangers. As a married woman, a certain kind of demeanour is expected from her.

Nittilai in the beginning of the play is young and a happy tribal girl but she commits the mistake of desiring a Brahmin boy, Arvasu.

NITILAI. It's not often that they get a Brahmin groom- (1.111)

The words are very significant as they reflect the prevalent social norms of the distinction of the upper and the lower caste in the institution of marriage.

ARVASU. ... I'm about to jettison my caste, my people, my whole heritage for you. Can't you forget a minor custom for my sake? (112)

Arvasu loves Nittilai but his words convey the discomfort of his decision to marry a tribal girl. He even mentions the word "outcaste" (113) with respect to himself after marrying Nittilai. He points out to Nittilai to give up a tradition. Nittilai as a tribal girl had lived a free life. But she is very well aware of the inhibitions that a woman has to live with throughout her life.

VISHAKHA. They say that pleased with your rigorous penance, Lord Indra has granted you Universal knowledge. I don't feel equal to the task of- (1.119)

VISHAKHA. I can't believe! The whole world may be singing your praise. But you haven't grown up! (1.121)

Vishakha, as a woman, does not have recourse to knowledge because of the limitations on her in the use of discourse as a normal part of her life. Here she is asking Yavakri what seems to be her piece of information from the male superiors that she might have gathered around. Yavakri laughs at Vishakha when she tells him that his knowledge is of no use as he had not gained mental maturity with the passage of time.

RAIBHYA. You go to fetch water. And your brother- in- law carries it back for you. Strange! What is happening here? Why are you so filthy? You look like a buffalo that's been rolling in mud. (1.126)

RAIBHYA. You want to run away, do you? All right. Go. But where will she go? (1.127)

Vishakha is questioned by her father in law Raibhya with respect to her appearance. Vishakha is required to give a satisfactory answer to her father in law as he administers a complete control over her in the absence of her husband.

VISHAKHA. Will you come once the sacrifice is over? (2.141)

VISHAKHA. ... My silence again followed by yours. Silences endlessly repeated... But I am sick of silence. (2.141)

The moment Parvasu comes in the dark of the night from the place of the sacrifice he does not feel the need to talk to his wife, Vishakha. Parvasu gives no heed to what Vishakha has to say. Vishakha's anguish gets aggravated when in the absence of her husband she has to tolerate the lustful eyes of her father- in- law.

NITTILAI. We can't talk in this place. Let's go there. (3.150)

NITTILAI. ...That scares me, Arvasu. I'm still young. I don't want to die.

(3.161)

NITTILAI. Please, Brother-Husband-please, don't- (172)

Nittilai wanders from place to place in search of Arvasu. When she finally finds him, it is impossible for her to talk to him in public. If Nittilai wants to help Arvasu, she has to hide from her father, brother and husband. She is very well aware of her limitations as a woman and the social space that is denied to her. Nittilai fears death and she is aware of the penalty of death for herself if her husband and brother are able to trace her. She pleads with both of them but they slash her throat.

Bali: The Sacrifice brings forth the saga of a queen, Amritamati, caught up in the trappings of discourse of patriarchy. She lives a life in continual threat of violence that is around her in the form of sacrifices in the palace and also inside her that results from her disappointment with herself for not being able to curb those sacrifices. The play begins with the Queen committing adultery with the Mahout.

QUEEN. I didn't want you to see my face. (78)

MAHOUT. Why? Are you ugly? (78)

The Queen is cognizant of her limitations to reveal her face to the Mahout. She tried to hide her appearance from him. The first thing that comes to the mind of Mahout is her being an ugly woman. The Mahout is himself ugly but he would not take that in a woman. The Queen belongs to an upper class than him but still, the Mahout does not hesitate to treat her harshly.

QUEEN. I'll say I'd gone for a walk. (79)

QUEEN. I don't want to talk about it. (79)

QUEEN. Let me warn you- if we get caught together here, it won't be pleasant for either of us. (80)

QUEEN. You are not ugly, you know. You are lonely. (81)

QUEEN. That's why you are holding me prisoner... (81)

The Queen is rightly aware that she has to use the pretext of going for a walk, to her husband as what she has done is unacceptable according to the set norms of society. She informs the Mahout of the consequences of being caught alone in the temple premises. She admonishes him for setting her free and let her go back to the palace. The Queen is able to feel that same loneliness in the Mahout what she goes through inside the walls of her palace. Her use of the word "fawning" is meant for the exaggerated love that the King showers on her and which stifles her breath. Her encounter with the Mahout was short- lived but stark and without any kind of inflation. The Queen seems to value his rugged way of talking which sounded genuine to her.

QUEEN. ... You can be surrounded by people who are talking- fawning on you- and you can be lonely. So lonely you are terrified. I should know. (82)

QUEEN. Thank you. I'll never forget you. (82)

QUEEN. I can't stay here till the morning-(84)

MAHOUT. And I don't want to get caught with you, whoever you are. (84)

QUEEN. No, me. For one night, I was nameless. (88)

The king has a very settled form of opinion about himself. He tells the Queen that a King must wage wars and issue orders. This is what patriarchy has taught him. He also makes fun of the Queen's religion and the kind of their religious preachers which are called Saviours. The king and the Queen are shown as small children who have imbibed the set norms according to the traditions set for them.

KING. Why should a king solve riddles? He must rule. He must fight wars.

He must make proclamations... (90)

KING. You are Jains, aren't you? ... Saviours are all stark naked. (90)

QUEEN. And ... and my maid says your goddess eats meat. (90)

QUEEN. You're making fun... I don't want to marry you. (90)

The Queen is reluctant to declare her pregnancy for the fear of being judged by her husband, her mother- in- law and the people around. The words of the Mother are significant at the way they portray the meagre value attached to the one because of whom the family tree blooms. The King also tries to justify the look of the people for the Queen which she finds as "vicious".

QUEEN. ... I waited till I was sure. (93)

QUEEN. ...You have made our family tree bloom. (94)

KING. Yes, Mother. She'll be your obedient daughter- in-law. (94)

KING. They meant well. They were only anxious. (94)

QUEEN. They were vicious. (94)

The Mother does not want to rejoice for a pregnancy which she thinks that the Queen might be feigning.

MOTHER. I hope it's not a repetition. (99)

MOTHER. You became the laughing stock of the world... (100)

The King loves the Queen and is ready to take her back but he insists on carrying out a sacrifice in the form of a cock made of dough which to the Queen is violence in all its form. The Queen insists on sorting it out with the King inside the four walls of their palace.

KING. But we can't go back as though nothing has happened. (111)

QUEEN. We'll face it together. But not here. At home. (111)

Wedding Album has Vidula as the main female character. The play, upon an analysis, discusses marriage as closing the possibilities of emancipation for women. The play consists of Vidula's mother, her sister Hema, their maid Radhabai, the T.V. producer Pratibha, Rohit's wife and Radhabai's daughter, Yamuna. The life of the female characters revolves around kitchen talk and sari talk. Vidula's mother relates to her daughters how she had to plead to their father for making proper arrangements for Hema's marriage and to give her due.

MOTHER. ... I pleaded with your father. I almost fell at his feet... let's get some jewellery made for them. (2.15)

Vidula belongs to a simple Saraswat Brahmin family, where finding a husband for her is the ultimate goal for her parents. Vidula's father calls marriage a

“gamble” (2.27). Rohit teaches his sister the way she has to present herself for the marriage alliance to succeed and this is what Vidula has to follow without questioning. Vidula lives a very secretive life. Her attitude towards herself is very different inside the cyber cafe as seen inside her house. It is required on her part to follow the traditional attitude towards marriage, something that Hema is able to describe with respect to the kind of life that she lives in Australia with her husband and children.

HEMA. ...We Indian women, on the other hand, are obedient Sati Savitris, ever willing to follow in our husband's footsteps. (2.17)

As is with Vidula, same is with Hema, whose lives are channelized by the norms of patriarchy. Vidula has to take up the road decided for her by her family as Hema lives her life in accordance with her husband.

ROHIT. We live in a modern world. A divorce is okay. It's no shame. (9.86)

VIDULA. I'll never divorce Ashwin. (9.86)

VIDULA. Of the bargain? I trust him. He is my husband after all. (9.87)

VIDULA. I have given up eating fish. (9.86)

As per Rohit's words divorce is no longer considered a shame in our society and if this was really not so, Vidula would never announce her decision of not divorcing Ashwin if something went wrong. She decided to change her lifestyle according to the way Ashwin expected of her. The word, “husband” meant trust for Vidula and not to question what he expected from her in their new house. And as

later in the play, Vidula remains steady in following her husband in order to be a mother. She is not allowed to visit her parents on grounds of ill health after a miscarriage. Vidula or Hema are no different from Radhabai.

RADHABAI. ...God broke this forehead of mine and took away my husband... So I have got to live in your house and take whatever humiliations you pile on me. (2.21)

MOTHER. This is what happens with the female cooks...You can't get male cooks any longer, that's the problem. (2.23)

VIDULA. ... Radhabai never saw her daughter again. (4.53)

A quarrel ensues between the Mother and Radhabai in the context of kitchen. The Mother has problem with Radhabai occupying a space much more than a servant should in the house. The Mother starts comparing her to the male servant they had earlier in the house. Vidula and Hema share words regarding their childhood when the male servant Nagappa used to misbehave with them. Radhabai stands the risk of losing her job if she does not satisfy the family which gives her shelter. Vidula also narrates to Hema the reason about Radhabai's sudden tantrums as she is uncomfortable with the thoughts of her daughter Yamuna running insane on the roads of the city.

GOPAL. ... She is a modern girl- educated and sensitive. How can you push her aside without a word?... (2.38)

GOPAL. ...Why shouldn't we? It's for our only daughter. (2.38)

GOPAL. I said quiet! Now, Rohit, we have told everyone in Hyderabad. (3.39)

Gopal is here literally throwing his daughter Tapasya on Rohit. Gopal wants Rohit to marry the girl whom he has never met and this alliance has been talked over by the parents out of which the girl's side is adamant to marry off their daughter to Rohit. The girl is even made to understand that Rohit is the best choice for her. A word about a daughter's marriage in the town, if once out, has to be done with in order to save the family honour.

YOUTH 1. Lady, you are a disgrace to our Indian culture. (6.69)

YOUTH 2. If anything appears in the papers tomorrow, I won't be able to show my face to fellow Saraswats. (6.70)

ATTENDANT. ... For all their talk of culture, they are only interested in money. I pay their hafta. (6.71)

ASHWIN. ...My brains and my charm. As you know, we Saraswat Brahmans are brought up to be nice- to lay on the jam. (8.79)

The youth sermonise on how women are required to be the upholders of tradition and culture in an Indian set- up. Youth too even feels ashamed of being a fellow Saraswat Brahmin. The attendant puts it right when he informs Vidula that all they want is to extract money from the cyber cafe. The norms set up for girls in middle class families and the way they are disposed off on the pretext of marriage calls into question the prevailing situation of women in our society.

Discourse authorises an institution to affect relations of power through its rules. Discourse also determines the way those rules structure the meaning. Discourse is born out of the social practices. As pointed out by Foucault that, "In order to be

effective and powerful, a discourse needs a material base in established social institutions and practices” (Foucault, *Archaeology* 100). Our apprehension of an object is structured around discourse. It is through the statements that the conditions prevailing for the women find its representation. In the context of the plays under study, the discourse signifies the male attitude towards women. The effectiveness of the discourse of patriarchy is achieved by the sufferings of the women. Discourse helps power to proliferate and through the institution of marriage constitutes the women as objects who are supposed to breathe within the parameters of the rules of exclusion. It is here in exclusion that the gender roles are defined.

The analysis of plays, under study, shows the representations of female characters being put to silence. Taking into account the author function as suggested by Foucault (Foucault, *Essential* 382), Karnad’s plays can be said to be the circulations of discourse existing in the society. Discourse on patriarchy functions to bring the relations of power through the institutionalisation of such power. Sharmistha in *Yayati*, Rani and Kurudavva in *Nagamandala*, Padmini in *Hayavadana*, Vishakha and Nittilai in *The Fire and the Rain*, the Queen and Queen Mother in *Bali: The Sacrifice* and Vidula, Hema, Mother, Radhabai, Yamuna in *Wedding Album* are the ones who have been demarcated as abnormal from the normal. These female characters live a life under the taboos imposed upon them. Rani is not allowed to speak by her husband Appanna. He shows no inclination to even listen to her difficulty and confusion of being left alone and locked inside the four walls of the house. In the paper “The Bold and the Meek” (2005) by Ranbir Singh, it is mentioned by the author that Girish Karnad did not change the folk-atmosphere of the play and so, presented Rani and Kurrudavva as meek women. I

quiet disagree with this statement in the sense that Karnad in all of his plays presented before his readers the society as it existed. The meekness of the female characters has less to do with the folk element and much more to the dominant discourses of our society where a woman is expected not to question men. Rani agreed to ask no questions from the Naga for the sheer fact that Naga's affection and care was just what this woman wanted and she did not mean to lose it on any account. Sinh also mentions that "Rani is the picture of Indian womanhood, who meekly submits to fate" (Talwar and Chakrabarty 78). I must mention that it is not fate but the social structure where the workings of discourse bring a woman into subjugation. Sharmistha's agony of being left enslaved in the palace of Yayati understood by none. The palace is full of people but there is no single soul who is ready to talk to her. Devayani uses the words, "same old stings" (9) and "blunted barbs" (9) for Sharmistha whose tongue has been put to silence by confining her to Yayati's palace. This is exactly what Devayani suffers once the King takes a fancy for Sharmistha and Devayani's pleadings to the King not to take Sharmistha for a consort fall on the deaf ears. Appanna, the man decides for Rani. King Yayati puts taboos of all kinds on Sharmistha, Devayani and Chitrlekha. Swarnalata is never able to separate the truth from falsity and is abandoned by her husband. Kapila chases Padmini from the day he casts his look at her. It is Kapila, who not only hides his desire for Padmini from Devadutta but also follows Padmini. Devadutta has no sense of humour when Padmini tries to talk in a careless manner and Devadutta puts her to silence. Discourse is a conditioning of the body through the social practices. The Queen, in *Bali: The Sacrifice* hesitates to declare her pregnancy because of the doubts that her husband and mother-in-law have in her. Marriage as an institution

runs according to the rules of patriarchy and is able to subjugate the women by forcing them to silence. As Bartky contends, “Female subjectivity is constructed through a continuous process, a personal engagement in the practices, discourses, and institutions that lend significance (value, meaning and effect) to the events of the world” (Bartky 118).

Power is administered through discourse. Differentiations and divisions are administered through language. Discourse is detrimental in deciding the status of an individual in a given set-up. The language structures and binds a woman’s identity into a set of regulations. As Foucault avers, “... power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition.” (Foucault, *Power* 119) We define a woman’s role according to the set- standards. The social- practices shade a woman’s life and discourse is one of those. Silence is still considered a jewel for a woman.

Chapter – 4

Objectification through Discipline: Female Characters and Surveillance

Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* enumerates in detail the strong webs of relations of power and the rules which strengthen the cord of discipline. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* is a detailed account of the effects of power on the body and its consequent angst in the soul. Once again, the division of the normal and the abnormal individuals comes to the forefront and its relation to punishment, discipline and an object of knowledge for the fulfilment of discursive practices. To quote Judith Butler from her preface to *Gender Trouble*, "... indeed, power appeared to operate in the production of that very binary frame for thinking about gender." (Butler, Preface, *Gender* xxx) The objectification of the body through discipline is countered through its usefulness. Discipline, itself, is a seizure of the body. Discipline regulates, "... its very forces and operations..." (Bartky 65) Further as indicated by Bartky, discipline is directed towards a specific manipulation of the bodily gestures and also "... a display of the body as an ornamental surface" (Bartky 65). Discipline is meant to confine an individual to a circumscribed space and the violation of this space is ascribed to looseness. As a matter of fact, the worst scenario in case of the discursive practices is that, the forms of punishment cannot be accounted for within the framework of society. The objectified individual is left with no choice. It is with respect to discipline and punishment that the body becomes an easily accessible entity. Foucault uses the term 'political economy' (Foucault, *Reader* 172) of the body. To quote Foucault's words, "... even if they do not make use

of violent or bloody punishment, even when they use “lenient” methods involving confinement or correction, it is always the body that is at issue-...” (Foucault, *Reader* 172) The body is manoeuvred to behave in a way that the discursive practices along with the relations of power require it to. The easy accessibility of the body results in its submission. Foucault talks about the kind of punishment that is without violence and bloodshed. Body as the target for punishment in the context of ‘political field’ (Foucault, *Reader* 173) establishes an immediate hold and control over it. Foucault avers, “... they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs” (Foucault, *Reader* 173). So, punishment in this sense can thus be understood in Foucauldian sense as, “If punishment makes use of body, it is not so much as the subject of a pain as the object of a representation” (Foucault, *Discipline* 94). Foucault clearly mentioned that punishment from the perspective of a social phenomenon sets out to repress women and as a political tactic also, it is targeted on women. (Foucault, *Essential* 170) As Butler also affirms that women do constitute that kind of a framework for whom “political representation” (Butler, *Gender* 2) is followed. She continues that whereas “representation” as an operative term lends to the category of women a perceptibility of a lawful “political subject” and this very representation also accords in revealing and distorting what seems to be the truth for that category of women. (Butler, *Gender* 2) Punishment as understood in Foucauldian terms is not so much about the actual sensation of pain but it is more about the idea of pain.” (Foucault, *Discipline* 96). Punishment, as understood from the context of the plays under consideration, is meant to be away of life for the body held in submission. Discipline by way of punishment, panopticon, surveillance, enclosure a bound in bending a body to docility (Foucault, *Reader* 180)

Discipline strengthens its cord by way of the techniques of enclosure, partitioning, functional sites or particular places and rank. In order to make these techniques effective, discipline makes use of complex spaces which, "... mark places and indicate values; they guarantee the obedience of individuals, ..." (Foucault, *Discipline* 148). These complex spaces work upon the body, which in Foucault's words, can be explained as, "The individual body becomes an element that may be placed, moved, articulated on others." (Foucault, *Discipline* 164)

The body is made to serve in subjection if it is not only productive but in which the basic reason is 'need' (Foucault, *Reader* 173). This kind of subjection is categorized, organised, technically thought out ..." (Foucault, *Reader* 173) but at the same time, abstaining from the use of violence and weapons. Then too, Foucault considers this kind of subjection as pertaining to 'physical' order (Foucault, *Reader* 173). An abstinence of violence or weapons does not mean that it will not have any other negative impact upon the body. This kind of knowledge related to a control and mastery over the body is called 'political technology' (Foucault, *Reader* 173). Such a control over the body is not confined in its limits but is widespread. It is also not confined to a particular institution or is a constituent of any apparatus but may be located anywhere. The distribution of power in its generalised form is termed as 'microphysics' (Foucault, *Reader* 174) of power by Foucault. The range of this power is situated between an institution and the body. It reaches the depths of society in the form of daily struggles. As suggested by Foucault, it is equally difficult to ascertain the incidents in history but the effects of such incidents do influence an entire network. The body held in subjection goes unnoticed due to its confinement

within the disciplinary range of the relations of power. The need to ascertain such instances arise because as Foucault writes, “One needs to study what kind of body the current society needs....” (Foucault, *Power* 58)

The relations of power and knowledge discussed by Foucault help to know about the subjects who are aware of such a relation and his consequent objectification that is reflected in the interconnection of power and knowledge. Knowledge, being the sole possession of those in authority, brings those deprived of it into the realm of obedience. This in turn, helps to know the consequences, to which the objects in the power- knowledge relation, is put into. Foucault terms it as ‘body politic’ (Foucault, *Reader* 175) and defined it as a set of material elements and techniques that serves as weapons, relays, communication routes, and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge” (Foucault, *Reader* 176). In terms of what Butler explains, a body is socially constructed and to quote her precise words, “... “the body” appears as a passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed or as the instrument through which an appropriate and interpretive will determines a cultural meaning for itself” (Butler, *Gender* 12).

Punishment whether inflicted on the body or directed towards the soul brings to the forefront the classification and categorisation of a social set- up. Foucault directs our attention at the soul as a “reality” (Foucault, *Reader* 177) and its angst as a consequence of touching this reality which is produced as a result of the functioning of power on those who are categorised as abnormal. The angst in the soul is reflected from the body it inhabits. Foucault considered the soul as the prison of

the body (Foucault, *Discipline* 30). Foucault defines soul “as the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power and the reference of a certain type of knowledge, the machinery by which the power relations give rise to a possible corpus of knowledge, and knowledge extends and reinforces the effects of this power” (Foucault, *Reader* 177). It is this knowledge, by the one who is held in subjection, the utter realisation of this kind of knowledge through the soul that the effects of power are felt that reflects in the pain felt by the body as well as the resultant angst in the soul.

Foucault has given a description about signs by which a person can be recognised from afar. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* gives the description of a soldier. Here the thesis takes into account a body beautiful, yet weak in strength, adept in the art of cooking and seen at most of the times sitting near the hearth or moving about and attending to the house –hold chores. Body, in the case of a woman, has never ceased to be the object and the target of power. The body has always remained in submission. Foucault used the term “docility” (Foucault, *Reader* 180) with reference to the body. According to him, “A body, is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed, and improved” (Foucault, *Reader* 180). Such a body is controlled and subjugated and is held in prohibitions. The word ‘docile’ with respect to the body refers to the analysable as well as manipulative aspects of the body. No society, according to Foucault, is free from the grip of “infinitesimal power” (Foucault, *Discipline* 137). In Foucauldian terms, power is a strategy and so, it can be inferred that disciplinary power in the form of prohibition is also a strategy. It is what Foucault calls, “... general formulas of domination.” (Foucault, *Discipline* 137) In,

The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: I, it can be gathered from his ideas that laws of prohibition work, by forcing the body to display that prohibition not only as an essential trait but also as a compulsion.

It is imperative to understand the meaning of the word discipline as given by Foucault. In his words, discipline dealt with, “The methods which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility- utility, might be called ‘discipline’” (Foucault, *Discipline* 137). Foucault cleared his stance with respect to discipline which he said should not be understood in terms of slavery, service, vassalage or asceticism. Discipline, he held, brought a body in a kind of relationship to make it more obedient and useful. The body was brought in a certain kind of persuasion and its movements, gestures and behaviour were reconfigured. Foucault terms it as a ‘political anatomy’ (Foucault, *Discipline* 138) or a mechanics of power which specified, “... how one may have a hold over others’ bodies’ (Foucault, *Discipline* 138). The behaviour and conduct of a body were determined from thereupon. Discipline, then, is subjection which resulted in practiced or docile bodies (Foucault, *Discipline* 138). Discipline can be seen as a measuring rod that determined the utilisation of the body and removing at the same time what was found to be useless. By depriving the body of its essential attributes, discipline aimed at a political manoeuvring of the body. It is if one has to describe in the words of Sandra Lee Bartky that, “a body on which an inferior status has been inscribed” (Bartky 71).

Michel Foucault gives an account of the techniques, meant to affect discipline. ‘Enclosure’, (Foucault, *Discipline* 141) is one such technique which refers

to a place heterogeneous to all others and closed. The structure of the enclosure not only signified but also strengthened discipline. It was a form of control. An enclosure worked on the principal of assigning a certain space to an individual and at the same time circumscribing the individual's movements. As in Foucault's words, "Each individual has its own place; and each place its individual" (Foucault, *Discipline* 143). Space defined the tactics of manoeuvre and isolation of an individual which at the same time brought it under strict supervision as well as judgement. Discipline individualizes a body, gives it a position that is not fixed but keeps on circulating in a network of relations. Foucault was of the opinion that spaces provided fixed positions and permitted circulations; they mark places and indicate values; they guarantee the obedience of the individual, but also a better economy of time and gesture (Foucault, *Discipline* 146). It is the specific techniques of power that regards individuals both as objects and instruments of its exercise. Surveillance, another technique, establishes a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them. Surveillance with the aid of power and use of force is able to establish the truth. "Repressive hypothesis" (Foucault, *History*1:15), a term coined by Foucault, also helps to elaborate on the inhibitions imposed upon a body from the physical stance.

As enumerated by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, discipline differentiates individual from one another. Discipline seeks to establish the abilities of an individual after setting them up in hierarchies. Discipline attaches a kind of value to the ones considered at upper levels of hierarchy. Discipline sets the limits that define difference in relations (Foucault, *Discipline* 183). Discipline as a form of power along with the techniques it employs manifests itself in the subjection

of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected (Foucault, *Discipline* 185). Interestingly, disciplinary power is exercised through its invisibility but is easily visible to the one who is subjected (Foucault, *Discipline* 187). It is the fact of being constantly seen, that discipline holds them in subjection. Power in the form of discipline holds them in a mechanism of objectification (Foucault, *Discipline* 187). Objectification lies in the way power manifests its gaze upon the subject. The effects of this gaze are felt by this subject on their bodies which had become precisely legible and docile (Foucault, *Discipline* 188). Foucault was of the opinion that an individual was constructed out of the workings of power and this technique is called discipline. The negative impact of power can thus be seen when an individual is marked out as a separate entity after getting associated with discursive practices through the techniques of discipline. This particular individual represents such like individuals throughout the society. Power is productive only for those who wield it. It is thus a major impediment in the way of the emancipation of an individual and as pointed out in this thesis, in the life of women.

Panopticism is another effective way to influence the objectification through discipline. Panopticism as a technique, is a sure ground for surveillance. According to Foucault, "It is a segmented, immobile, frozen space. Each individual is fixed in its place. And, if he moves, he does so at the risk of his life, contagion or punishment" (Foucault, *Discipline* 195). The idea of panopticon reminds one, of the subjection of the individual through the division between the normal and the abnormal and the consequent objectification through the application of the binary

categorisation. Panopticon is symbolic of the ever-present power that operates through the confinement in order to limit the individual's liberty. It does so by way of observation and gaze, which act as a way of functioning power. Inmates are aware of their state of being. Panopticon as a model must be seen in its generalised form to work havoc on the day to day life of an individual. Foucault was of the opinion that any apparatus of power was made more intense through the panoptic schemata. Foucault unlike Jeremy Bentham considered a panopticon in its generalised form and applied this concept to the day to day life (Foucault, *Discipline* 204-5). Panopticon aimed at not only to watch the inmates through observation but also to regulate their conduct by specifying a limited space to them. The effects of power are visible through the way an individual, conducts oneself by limiting to the allotted space. Panopticon works on the body in silence. It serves as the channel to discipline without the use of force or coercion.

Discipline finds its ready and effective implementation through panopticon. Discipline itself is power and such a power is implemented through the structure of restricting the day to day life of an individual. The Panopticon aided by surveillance seeps down the surface of things to invest the body of an individual. It is primarily done by regulating the movement of an individual. Foucault considered the relations of power to be brought by discipline. In the words of Foucault, discipline is a, "... a power that insidiously objectifies those on whom it is applied; to form a body of knowledge about these individuals, rather than to deploy the ostentatious signs of sovereignty" (Foucault, *Discipline* 220). So, to say, discipline is one of the ways to bring about effective subordination.

The female characters in the plays of Girish Karnad are the ones who live within the precincts of disciplined bodies. Discipline, here, is studied as a form of power as suggested by Foucault. They are at once the objects of knowledge and the targets in the relations of power in patriarchy. Women, as analysed in the plays under study, are the objects available due to their easy accessibility. The female characters, as analysed in the plays under study, are found to be docile and subjugated. The body under repression is full of angst which finds its profound expression through the words of the female characters in these plays. The female characters in the plays are the objects as well as the source of knowledge for the male supremacy. This is assured by what Foucault termed as 'political anatomy' (Foucault, *Discipline* 138), which in the present context of the plays is well assured by the control advocated by the male superiors on the excluded female. Discipline as a form of power is further analysable in the plays under study at the way enclosures, space and surveillance become imminent and how the male characters impose the same on the excluded female. Sandra Lee Bartky affirms that a space for a woman is not where her body can act freely but it is rather a limitation for her (67). The female body in each of the plays is isolated for surveillance and subjugation through the social approval of the patriarchal norms. Panopticon is symbolised by the apparatus of family, marriage and society. Kate Millet, in her book *Sexual Politics*, affirms that patriarchy is the chief institution of family and is through the family that women are controlled (33). It is with respect to all these that the plays under study will be analysed in this chapter.

Yayati represents the unflinching regime of King Yayati, who marries Devayani as an easy accessible source of reaching out for acquiring 'sanjeevani'

(1.11) from her father Shukracharya. King Yayati takes Devayani out of the well, drenched in mud. Yayati is not at all interested in asking the name of the girl smeared in mud in so far that she turns out to be the daughter of the man who could grant eternal youth to the ambitious King. Sharmistha's words raise a doubt in the mind of Devayani who is forced to ask the King the reason of his choice of hers. Even one of the palace concubines is surprised at the way King Yayati never cared to ask the name of the Queen at the time of catching hold of her right hand. Devayani is shocked at this revelation by Sharmistha and she is bent upon an answer from the King as to the reason of his choice of hers. The King is not interested in answering her question as he reminds her of her duty as a Queen to welcome prince Pooru with his bride. Although the King's eventual reply points out to the fact of the insignificance of Devayani's presence in his life. Devayani's reply signifies her discomfort for the epithet "little pet" used for her. Devayani too easily puts herself on King Yayati at the time of their first meeting in the forest and for a man of Yayati's stature it was not at all difficult for the King to bring her to submission as his Queen. King Yayati uses the words "you were not exactly disinclined" (1.14) for pointing out to the fact of easy accessibility of Devayani. Devayani is really disturbed at the thought of being reminded that the King did not care to ask her name before taking her in his arms. Her discomfiture is quite evident at the way she gets anxious to ask the same questions as pointed out to her by Sharmistha. This analysis in Foucauldian sense can be referred to as the "political technology" (Foucault, *Discipline* 26) and "micro- physics" (Foucault, *Discipline* 26) of the body "... which pre-supposes that the power exercised on the body is conceived not as a property, but as a strategy,

...”(Foucault, *Discipline* 26) Power in the form of discipline is exercised in the form of tactics and is very much an effect of such tactics.

SHARMISTHA. Except that he is not lusting for you, you poor darling, he lusters for immortality. Your father’s art of ‘sanjeevani’. (1.11)

YAYATI. Oh, ho! What’s wrong? Tell me. What has upset my little pet?
(1.14)

DEVAYANI. I am the daughter of a Brahmin teacher. Pet is the thing I have never had the chance to be. (1.14)

King Yayati has also been long enamoured of Sharmistha. She is the one who has been imprisoned in the palace and with the King’s order has been put under surveillance inside the palace premises much against her wishes. No doubt, the King verbally attacks her by calling her the “accursed creature” (1.15) but by all means he makes sure to have her also. Sharmistha had long before learnt to lose her identity of a princess and subjugate her body according to the orders imposed upon her by her father. Sharmistha accompanies Devayani as her slave to the palace where every single resident considers her a slave. She has been punished to follow Devayani’s orders but she is also disciplined by the King who not only imposes conditions upon her about her conduct inside the palace but also demands good behaviour considering which he would free her from the palace. This decision was entirely meant to be taken by Devayani but the inferior position of a woman in marriage determines the rights associated with her to be administered by her husband. Instead of being under Devayani’s eyes, Sharmistha is watched over by King Yayati. The Foucauldian notion of “body politic” (Foucault, *Discipline* 28) as consistent of those modes which

assist in the formation of "... communication routes and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest the human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge (Foucault, *Discipline* 28). The vial of poison given to Sharmistha by her father assures the family norms never to return from an alien place. This vial of poison is symbolic of the disapproval meted out to the women who have to leave their families and who are never then accommodated by the authoritative father, who himself assured the vassalage of his daughter. Sharmistha in the given context of the play is a nowhere woman who does not actually have any sense of belongingness. In the later part of the play, king Yayati even calls her an outsider and throws the entire blame of his suffering old age on her.

King Yayati takes Sharmistha to bed and he restricts her from going anywhere outside the palace even when Devayani wants to set her free. King Yayati, without any inhibition, takes Sharmistha in marriage. He rightly hurts Devayani, because Sharmistha was actually in servitude of Devayani.

YAYATI. ... Tell the guards this lady may go anywhere she likes in the kingdom but she is to be kept under strict surveillance. (2.28)

YAYATI (to Swarnalata). You heard me. I want her kept under watch... (2.28)

DEVAYANI (horrified). Your queen ? Your royal consort ? (2.29)

YAYATI. ... Devi, what are you upset about? She will be lodged in a separate residence. I shall ensure that she does not impinge on your life for one fleeting moment. (2.29)

King Yayati makes sure to subjugate Devayani and Sharmistha both in body and soul. Sharmistha's angst at the way she is gazed and surveilled by the guards and the servant is expressed in her words. Devayani considers this punishment as unbearable to see her servant equal to her status. Her words are significant of her suppressed anger and distress. Devayani is forced to surrender her rights rather than sharing those. Sharmistha unlike her has no other place to go.

SHARMISTHA. ... Where is this guard who is supposed to keep an eye on me? I suppose Swarna will point him out. (2.30)

SHARMISTHA. And go where? My father will not accept me. And the King has me under watch. (2.33)

DEVAYANI. I am no Kshatriya queen to suffer relatives foisted on me. I am leaving.... (2.31)

In this play, Chitrlekha's destiny is no different. As a newly-wed, she is abandoned by her husband Pooru, who expresses the words about her which shows the docility to which women are groomed right from their childhood.

POORU. Yes, From her birth, she has been groomed for this moment and when it arrives, what does she find? ... (2.37)

Pooru while taking upon himself is not at all considerate about the future of Chitrlekha which he was responsible for. Chitrlekha finds herself lost in the midst of a conundrum. Out of the high ideals taught to her, she accepts Pooru's old age but is frightened to see his fragile and decrepit body which was young and agile at the time of her marriage to her. She is unable to decide through the test which is put

upon her as soon as she enters her married life. Chitralkha is asked to enter into a sacrifice from where she herself would not be able to gain anything. The punishment of abandonment meted out to her by her husband does not arise from any fault of hers. Swarnalata on her part is suffering the punishment of telling the truth which never really happen but she wanted her husband to get rid of the doubts in his mind regarding her chastity which even then he was not and slipped away from her life without even telling her and committed suicide. Swarnalata keeps on waiting for a man who never opened up regarding the doubts he had about her. The body of a woman is subjugated and disciplined to the extent that if found wanting is held in derision according to the unwritten norms in a patriarchy and is subjected to punishment whether or not guilty. Swarnalata's wait for her husband is a very long one. It is the example of that kind of "micropowers" (Foucault, *Reader* 174) where in a localized episode even if not documented, may well have its effects on the network of relations that it is caught up. (Foucault, *Reader* 174) of the Swarnalata rightly tells Chitralkha,

SWARNALATA. After a point, every story that matters has something to do
with nuptials. (4.54)

Nagamandala is a specimen of the undignified behaviour meted out to women in our society. Karnad has not failed to take the reader or the audience in the inner recesses of family life. Rani lives a restricted life as she is forbidden by her husband, Appanna, to move out of the premises of the house. The playwright shows the young girl Rani, frightened in the house of her husband and spending endless hours in loneliness. Marriage for Rani proves to be a difficult journey. Rani, at this

time, is able to understand the anxiety of her mother who kept on crying till the end when she was leaving with her husband. A woman is lonely in her marriage. The house for Rani is a symbol of panopticon to which she is condemned for a lifetime. Appanna, by all means intends to keep her enslaved in a corner of the house. Rani's movement is restricted to the kitchen and her bed after she retires from the day's work. Kurrudeva, the blind old woman's words signify the specificity attached to the allocation of space to a woman, that is, the house. Kurrudevva is doubtful if Appanna might have sent Rani back to her parents' home as she is very well aware of the way young married girls are treated rashly at the hands of their husbands and family.

RANI. Listen - (Fumbling for words) Listen -I feel - frightened alone at night
- (1.28)

APPANNA. ... Just keep to yourself. No one will bother you. Rice! (1.28)

KURRUDEVA. ... Even if he is lying in his concubine's house, his bride
should be home (1.29)

KURRUDEVA. You don't think he could have sent his wife back to her
parents already, do you? ... (1.30)

Restricting a woman's life to the extent of denying her a dignified life and depriving her of basic freedom inside the premises of the house are one of those forms of punishment that remain unaccounted for in our social system in the day to day life. The play also shows Rani as unaware of the whereabouts of her husband, as a wife is prohibited from interfering in the life of a husband. Rani's seclusion is also a political manoeuvre meant to control her movements and restrict her day to day life

inside the four walls of the house. Rani is at the same time under held under surveillance by Appanna who keeps an eye on her every single movement and makes sure to lock the house before he leaves the house. The words uttered by Kappanna are very significant in this regard.

KAPPANNA. Mother, what does it mean when a man locks his wife in?
(1.30)

KURUDDEVVA. ... He keeps his wife locked up like a caged bird? ... (1.30)

Kappanna's question has an obvious answer because we are not unaware of the difficulties faced by a married woman inside the house after marriage. The reference to 'caged bird' just accounts for the atrocities committed on woman in the relations of power. Rani is not aware of the whereabouts of her husband as she is made to understand by Appanna that she has no right to ask questions.

RANI. I don't know. (1.31)

RANI. ... 'Do this', 'Do that', 'Serve the food.' (1.31)

RANI. ... I would jump into a well- if only I could - (1.32)

Rani lives in deprivation of living a normal life. She even thinks about ending this deplorable life. Appanna foregrounds the patriarchal institution of deciding the course of Rani's life. Appanna makes it clear to Kuruddevva that his wife would not be allowed to talk to anyone. Appanna warned Kurudevva not to come near his house. He informed Kurudevva about the lock that he put on the outer door and thought it best to keep a watch dog for the ones who did not listen to his warning. Even the magical roots administered to Appanna fail to control him. The writer

points to the obvious fact that no amount of miracle can save a woman from the clutches of drudgery she is thrown into by a man. Rani's docility is proved by her words where it can be gathered that a woman would always forget her own pain but would never tolerate any harm to her husband. A woman is made docile to such an extent that she starts relating her whole life to her husband but same is not the case with men as it can be seen in the play that Appanna has no inhibitions in visiting his concubine. Appanna has not only a total disregard for the marital vows but also assures her complete docility and manipulates with Rani according to his desire. Appanna gets disturbed when Rani steps out of the house to pour hot red curry into the ant- hill. He slaps her and shows cold sneer towards her. Rani, by now, is aware of the treatment from Appanna. She continues to serve him without any complaint. Rani even loses her sense of time. She is so overpowered by Appanna that she fails to use her judgement to recognise Naga in the disguise of Appanna who happens to meet her during the night time. This is the reason she asks her usual and the only question allowed to be asked by her and that of offering food, even at night without ever wondering what makes her husband come to her during the night when he showed no signs of affection during the day. Naga's description of her is not something that she is used to from Appanna. The kind of description makes her nervous and what is for her something not normal. Naga seems to voice the views of the author about Appanna.

RANI. ... Suppose something happens to my husband? What will my fate be?

(1.37)

APPANNA. Rani, where have you been? (1.38)

RANI. But, when did you come? Shall I serve the food? (2.39)

NAGA. That a tender bud like you should get such a rotten husband. (2.39)

Rani, even when least aware of the actual identity of the Naga seems to be doubly, in the grip of the relations of power. The Naga on his part tries to manipulate the body in question, that of Rani. It is her unintentional move of pouring the red curry in the ant- hill that makes the Naga fall in love with her. Rani now turns out to be Naga's interest. The Naga is not unaware of the presence of Appanna, Rani's husband in her life before taking the disguise of him. He also makes sure that Rani waits for him at night during the nocturnal visits that he pays to her. It is fully to the knowledge of the Naga that Rani might conceive a child. Naga's astonishment at the news of Rani's pregnancy does show that inconsideration on his part also. The difference in behaviour of Appanna during the day and at night becomes a source of continuous angst to her. Naga, on his part, also manipulates Rani to fulfil his desire for her and is oblivious to the amount of pressure that Rani would have to undergo in society.

RANI. ... The face in the morning unrelated to the touch at night. (2.51)

RANI. I swear to you I haven't done anything wrong! (2.52)

APPANNA. I swear to you I am not my father's son, if I don't abort that
bastard! ... (2.52)

RANI. Why are you humiliating me like this? Why are you stripping me
naked in front of the whole village? ... (2.53)

Rani becomes an object of detestation. Her pregnancy lands her very life into jeopardy. Her pregnant body is dragged to the village to be brought before the scrutiny of village elders. There too, Rani is held in derision in the eyes of the village elders. The rigorous punishment of hot iron ordeal is suggested by the village elders to Rani to prove her innocence. Rani does undergo the one suggested by the Naga in the disguise of Appanna. Rani takes up the ordeal with a great deal of thoughtfulness at the consequences of taking such an ordeal.

RANI. Snake ordeal? What is that? (2.53)

RANI. ... Won't the cobra bite me the moment I touch it? (2.53)

RANI. ... And suppose what I think is the truth turns out to be false? (2.54)

The words reflect the actual state of affairs for women in our social set-up. Whatever they utter is falsity. But to focus on the concept of punishment, Rani has by now started doubting whether what she considers as truth might not actually be so and might become the real cause of her undeserved punishment and humiliation in front of the entire village.

ELDER I. Go on, child. Don't delay now. (2.56)

RANI. I am scared. Please- if the cobra bites me, what shall I do? I am afraid
- (2.56)

ELDER III. ... Accept your guilt. We shall then go on to consider the
punishment. (2.56)

RANI. ... I am not guilty of anything. What shall I plead guilty to? (2.56)

RANI. (Looking at the ant- hill) Yes, I shall take my oath ... holding the red-hot iron (2.56)

APPANNA. This is ridiculous! You can't allow this harlot.... (2.56)

Rani is made to choose her punishment either to put her hand into the ant- hill or to touch the red- hot iron rod. The village elders are more in favour of her touching the red- hot iron rod and finds themselves saved when Rani tilts towards the decision of touching the red- hot rod. As inferred by Foucault, “The very excess of the violence employed is one of the elements of its glory: ...” (Foucault, *Discipline* 34). A red hot iron rod or putting a hand in the ant-hill in order to touch the cobra for proving one's innocence does glorify and put the painful and fearful penalties of a crime on a higher pedestal. This glorification is again to prove “... the truth of the crime.” (Foucault, *Discipline* 35) Her question of what shall she plead guilty to is very significant. She is made to stand before the entire village for the fault she is not even aware of. Her guilt is forced upon her. To describe the condition of Rani, with the idea that Bartky holds, would be that a woman's body becomes a matter of shame for her and primarily it comes off in the form of her body being deficient (72). The village elders address her as a ‘child’ (2.56) and are fully aware of the dangers to which Rani is asked to go through. Rani's objectification can be seen by the kind of fear that she expresses in front of the whole village and at the way she is held responsible to be answerable for her supposed guilt, not only in front of her husband but the entire village.

Hayavadana presents the objectification of Padmini who not only forms the object of interest for Devadutta and Kapila but also suffers for the desire that arises

out of the disciplinarian life she is made to live with Devadutta. The race to acquire Padmini is settled doubtlessly by the fact of hierarchical power that resides with Devadutta, the learned and the affluent Brahmin. Kapila lags behind on account of his caste affiliations and also being bereft of the droplets from the fountain of knowledge. Padmini is doubly marginalised on account of being not only a woman but also as lacking in knowledge as compared to her husband, Devadutta. Padmini's sensuousness and infinite beauty becomes the cause of intense pain to her very being. Bartky has expressed her opinion that beauty and an attractive body might win the approval of the onlooker but an attractive body is hardly able to gain respect or social approval (73). It would also be worthwhile to elaborate on what Bartky terms as "bodily perfection" (67) that beauty of the body is one of the disciplines to which men bind women. Men have their own configuration of beauty. Devadutta is the one who tries to administer complete control over her body by restricting her bodily movements beyond the precincts of their house. So much so, Devadutta gets weary of the Kapila's physical presence inside their house and the same is pointed to Padmini from time to time by the anxious Devadutta but never to Kapila. Padmini might be the love interest for Devadutta but is never able to administer any kind of power or influence on Devadutta. Devadutta ensures Padmini's subjugation by issuing ethical directives to her in their day to day life. Padmini's words are quite precise as to express her docility before what her husband, Devadutta forbids her to do.

PADMINI. Sorry, I forgot. I apologize - I slap myself on the cheeks (slaps herself on both cheeks with her right hand several times in punishment.) (1.92)

Devadutta tries to restrict Padmini's life. He strongly reprimands her from accompanying Kapila. Padmini is very well aware of Devadutta's attitude towards her and even points out the way Devadutta would never bother for her.

PADMINI. ... If I fall into a well tomorrow, you won't even miss me until my bloated corpse floats up (2.92)

Devadutta tries to administer his complete hold on Padmini's body and becomes the sole decision maker in her life. This accounts for more out of his concern to avoid her contact with Kapila than out of his genuine concern for her health.

DEVADUTTA. Kapila, we have to call off today's trip. (1.92)

Padmini lives a life in the 'enclosures' (Foucault *Discipline* 141) built for her by Devadutta wherein he tries to confine her movement inside the four walls of the house. Not only this, Devadutta also expects from Padmini to confine her thoughts to him alone. The play is strongly suggestive of the space allocated to a woman that is defined around her husband. A woman is supposed to abide by within that space allocated to her.

DEVADUTTA. (Embarrassed.) You see, Padmini isn't well.... (1.94)

DEVADUTTA. (Aside.) She had so much to talk all day, she couldn't wait for breath. Now -not a word. (1.96)

The ethical question of chastity with respect to women is one of the strong issues raised in *Hayavadana*.

FEMALE CHORUS. (Sings). Why should love stick to the sap of a single body? When the stem is drunk with the thick yearning of the many - petalled, many- flowered lantana, why should it be tied to the relation of a single flower?

The author does raise the question of going beyond and not merely tying oneself to a single person. The thesis would raise the issue of chastity as moving beyond women and applying it equally on men. If chastity is to be revered it should be from both the sides rather than binding only women to it. Marital norms as per tradition of any society in any culture are required to be obeyed by both sharing that bond rather than bringing only women to obey. The play also refers to Padmini following the patriarchal norm of committing Sati on the funeral pyre of both, Devadutta and Kapila. The word 'pativratas' (2. 132) in context of women in an Indian society does not fail to mention the strings of strict discipline woven round their lives. Judith Butler affirms Satre's opinion in the preface to *Gender Trouble* that desire on the part of women considered in the sense of heterosexual aspect as well as that of masculinity was established as a trouble. (Butler, Preface, *Gender xxx*)

The Fire and the Rain is the saga of power and knowledge considered to be the forte for only men. Vishakha and Nittilai are the bodies in subjection because they are deprived of any such power and knowledge. Vishakha, who happens to be the married companion of Parvasu, the one who holds the right to perform the fire sacrifice in the play, is considered unworthy of her husband as soon as the latter is invited by the King to perform the sacrificial rites. The vows by way of marriage are denied to Vishakha as Parvasu has to reach for higher goals and for which women are forbidden to accompany their men. The discursive practices of religious rituals

discard women as unworthy of higher spiritual goals. Vishakha lives a life of abandonment. Her stature of a woman even deprives her of avoiding every other man on earth. She lives a life full of deprivation as her husband Paravasu would not come back to her for seven long years. Paravasu shows no traces of affection towards his wife or any concern for her when he returns in the midst of the sacrificial prayers at night to kill his father, Raibhya. Vishakha very clearly denies Yavakri as a part of her confinement to the rules of marriage that she is not even living. Vishakha is in awe of the knowledge that she heard Yavakri had acquired from God Indra. She already considers herself as inferior to Yavakri who had earlier been her lover. Yavakri at this time makes fun of her little knowledge about his penance. Yavakri might have possessed Universal Knowledge but his attitude towards women didn't change a bit. He employed Vishakha as a medium to reach out to his enemies. Vishakha soon realises the superficiality of Yavakri's knowledge which he wanted to use to punish his adversaries.

VISHAKHA. That's over and done with now. (1.119)

VISHAKHA. ... I live in this hermitage, parched and wordless, like a she-devil...(1.122)

VISHAKHA. They say that pleased with your rigorous penance, Lord Indra has granted you Universal Knowledge. I don't feel equal to the task of-
(1.119)

VISHAKHA. I can't believe it! The whole world may be singing your praises. But you haven't grown up. These ten years have not made any difference to your teenage fantasies (1.121)

Vishakha was in love with Yavakri but is made to marry Paravasu by her father in Yavakri's absence. Vishakha's words, about her husband's treatment of her, in marriage, raise the concern for every woman found useful and docile. Vishakha is thrown into a never-ending confinement inside the hermitage along with her brother-in-law and her also under the greedy eyes of her father-in-law. Vishakha is not exploited sexually by her father-in-law but also forms the thorn in his eye for befriending their enemy Yavakri. It is less due to family animosity but more because of the jealousy that is aroused for Yavakri by the lustful old man. Vishakha's life is confined not only by her husband Paravasu but also by her father-in-law inside the four walls of the hermitage. The hermitage as well as the marital bond forms the symbolic panopticon and both act as an apparatus of redefining her life within the norms set up for her.

VISHAKHA. Yes, Father was happy. I was married off to Paravasu. I didn't want to, but that didn't matter (1.122)

VISHAKHA. ... He used my body, and his own body, like an experimenter,... But in all these seven years he hasn't come back... But I look forward to having him home once the seven years are over. (1.123)

RAIBHYA. You want to run away, do you? All right. Go. But where will she go?

RAIBHYA. You whore- you roving whore! I could reduce you to ashes- turn you into a fistful of dust- with a simple curse. But let that husband of yours handle you (1.127)

Vishakha is doubly punished first by her husband, Parvasu, who abandons her and also confines her to hermitage. She is also punished by Yavakri who poses to love her but actually advocates docility from her body to fulfil his rivalry against her husband and her father-in-law. Yavakri proves more pernicious for Vishakha because it is he who disturbs her solace in the discipline to which she had somehow bound her life with.

VISHKHA. Challenge? (1.131)

YAVAKRI. Do you think all this happened accidentally? You think I would leave anything to chance? ... (1.131)

YAVAKRI. It was fortunate that you yielded. If you hadn't I would have had to take you by force. (1.131)

Nittilai's fate is no different from that of Vishakha. A woman has no right to choose her partner in marriage as is held in strict accord within the rules set up in patriarchy. Nittilai fails to come to terms with her husband as she never ceases to love Arvasu. She runs from her house and is followed by her husband and brother. Arvasu on his part failed to attend the elders meeting set for him and Nittilai. Nittilai's brother does not let Arvasu meet the elders as the latter gets late than the set time. Nittilai's brother tells Arvasu and reproduces his father's humiliation at the hands of Arvasu, a Brahmin. He also informs Arvasu how Nittilai suffered when Arvasu didn't arrive at the appointed time.

BROTHER. Arvasu, since you failed to attend the council meeting, the elders decreed that Nittilai will marry another boy- of our own tribe. (2.135)

BROTHER. That'll have to be, Arvasu. It's the decision of the Elders. (2.135)

BROTHER. ... he said, 'I'm willing to marry her off to anyone who'll take her.'.. (2.136)

BROTHER. ... She is exhausted. Even now she is crying her heart out. You'll only make it worse for her by hanging around here. Go away. (2.137)

Nittilai runs for her life. She is chased by her brother and her husband. She fears punishment for breaking the rules of discipline that her tribal men laid upon her. She wanders from place to place as her life turns out in to a chaos. Nittilai is killed by her husband who slashes her throat and leaves her dropped on the ground nothing less than an animal. Arvasu could have averted this situation only if he could have kept his words given to Nittilai when her father summoned him to talk about their marriage. Foucault describes torture as a kind of punishment in the case of Nittilai can be explained in the following words, "... death is a torture in so far as it is not simply a withdrawal of the right to live, but is the occasion and the culmination of a calculated gradation of pain." (Foucault, *Discipline* 33) The gravity of Nittilai's mistake of running from home is well proportionated by the intensity of the pain inflicted upon her body.

NITTILAI. I was on my way-and I saw them. They were sitting round a fire...They didn't see me-in the dark-(3.160)

ARVASU. Who? (3.160)

NITTILAI. They don't know I'm here...They must have been searching among friends and relatives. (3.160)

NITTILAI. ... I'm still young. I don't want to die. (3.161)

Vishakha question is very significant which she asks her husband, Parvasu. These words carry significance with respect to the female characters who are in search of happiness and who desire happiness which is denied to both of them as a part of their punishment for tracing their paths pre-destined for them by the disciplinarian techniques of patriarchy. Vishakha is very well aware of the punishment which might be set-up for her by the person authorised to do so. Parvasu, on his part, does not mince words in getting the exact words out of his mouth for punishing her rightly but it is seen in the play that he abandons her forever which is nothing less than an eternal punishment for her. Parvasu does not even consider her worthy of talking to her. It is with difficulty that Vishakha has to extract words out of his mouth for herself.

VISHAKHA. I suppose that would be too human. But what's wrong with being human? What's wrong with being happy, as we were before you got Indra into you? ... But I am sick of silence ... I'll lay myself open to you as a devoted wife. (2.141)

PARAVASU. You want me to kill you? (2.141)

VISHAKHA. At last, a question from you. (2.141)

Vishakha and Nittilai are the kind of women who can be the object of desire but not much of significance for their male counterparts. Their bodies suffer in subjugation as they become the object of male anger which holds them in submission to the unwritten laws of society. The bodies in their case are inscribed by the eternal

docility to which they are subjected. Both of them suffer in body and soul. Bartky talks about discipline for women as that kind of oppression that requires sexual subordination from women and turns them into an amenable companion for men (75).

Bali: The Sacrifice is a heart-rending tale about the unending sufferings of the Queen, Amritamati, who compromises on her chastity, a value held dear by the patriarchal norms of society. The play is a stark revelation of the impact of power on the body, the body in question being that of the Queen. The play reveals her angst at the treatment meted out to her for thinking beyond what the society prohibited her from, a mind of her own. The Queen lives continually under the threat of a discipline that is required of her inside the palatial walls of her husband. The Queen's principles, with which she has been bred forms the panopticon for her and from which she finds it difficult to come out. Punishment, in the form of repression comes to her as a dictum by those authorised for it. Her moment of transgression turns out to be a proclamation of her tragic end as her belief in non- violence comes into a direct clash with those of violence. The Queen is not unaware of her objectification by all those present around her. The Queen stands as a representation of whatever is targeted on a woman in a patriarchal set- up.

QUEEN. Yes! Yes! Now I'll show them, I'll show those swine. All these years I have waited for this moment. Prayed for it. Cringing at their glances-(94)

KING. As subjects of this land, they were interested in an heir. Fair enough.
(94)

QUEEN. Your subjects. For me, they were my judges, my interro-gators, torturers-all clubbed together against me. (94)

QUEEN. ...To pretend you are unaware of their gaze as they scrutinize the roundness of your belly, the stain on your thigh! (95)

The Queen is here talking of the wary eyes of the onlookers searching for the signs of pregnancy on her body. The King does not object to their gaze as it is expected of a woman to bear a child. The King fails to see the angst that infects her soul to a desperate attempt to bear a child. She can very well identify with the Mahout's loneliness as she herself suffers from it. The Mahout just considers her as another woman meant for the gratification of his desires. The Mahout threatens the Queen and boasts of beating many women before her. The Queen rightly understands Mahout's need for a companion, the kinds she would really wish for herself. She loves her husband but does not like to be chased by the question of bearing a child which the poor woman is unable to under the pressure of circumstances. Her body fails to bring forth what it is expected to, by the King and others.

QUEEN. If you mean you are tall and fair with an aquiline nose and ruby lips-I live surrounded by such men and I am sick and tired of them. (77)

QUEEN. You're not ugly, you know. You are lonely.

QUEEN. That's why you are holding me prisoner. You don't want to know my name. You want someone to talk to. (81)

MAHOUT. ... When I've wanted a woman-needed a woman-my voice has never failed me. ... (75)

MAHOUT. ...You can't just sleep with a woman and let her go-just like that...What's your name?... (75)

MAHOUT. Don't make me angry. You don't know my temper. I have beaten women black and blue (76)

MAHOUT. Don't be absurd. After all we've done together... I mean, this coyness, this fuss....(83)

The Queen gets alarmed at the movement outside the temple where she is hiding with the Mahout. She pleads with the Mahout to let her go but the latter insists on knowing her identity before he allowed her to leave. The Queen at this time is a prisoner of the Mahout. The Mahout is ready to a consensual act with the Queen but is not ready to take any responsibility for the same. He does not want anyone to see him with a woman. His suggestion of avoiding the intruders outside also requires the Queen to act on his directives to pose the act in progression.

QUEEN. Look, no one must know I'm here. Please I must go home. Immediately: Oh God! Is there any other way out of here? (83)

QUEEN. Please, please, keep down your voice down. They mustn't know we're here-(84)

MAHOUT. And I don't want to get caught with you, whoever you are. God alone knows whose wife you are.... (84)

The Queen's objectification is assured by the Queen Mother who imbibed within her the patriarchal values and tries to see them obeyed and nourished in her

daughter- in- law. The pregnant Queen can almost be identified as a branch of a tree awaited to gush forth a bright flower. The Queen Mother does not mince words in even raising her doubts regarding the Queen's pregnancy to the King. She even tells the King to get it confirmed from the palace nurse. Her stingy words about a proverb on women leave no doubt as to her complete disapproval and disregard for her daughter- in- law when the Queen fails to bear a child earlier.

MOTHER. God Bless you! You have made our family tree bloom. May you beget a son whose glory blinds the eight directions...You need to take special care. (94)

KING. Yes, Mother. She'll be your obedient daughter- in- law. (94)

MOTHER. ... I don't want to be nasty. But I am your mother and it worries me. Are you sure she's pregnant? (99)

MOTHER. ... 'A hen doesn't need a cock to lay eggs', one of them was saying.' She can do it on her own!' I could have died of shame. (100)

The Queen is strongly detested by the Queen Mother when found guilty of transgressing. She is informed about this by her own son. Punishment takes the form of social repression as when a woman breaks an unwritten norm, she is held to be publically responsible for her conduct. She is supposed to be scrutinised openly.

MOTHER. Has she fallen so low? The whore-And you. How can you stand here like this? I should cut her to pieces...feed her to wolves and vultures. Do it, son, now! (107)

MOTHER. ... You are not bound by your vows now.... (107)

The Queen is tired of being under the constant surveillance of the King, his mother and each one in the palace who watch her every step. She is deprived of her essential physicality by her husband who not only justifies to her his wish for a male heir but also considers the scrutiny of others as a genuine concern for the kingdom. It is essentially this micro- physics of power that Foucault referred to. It is the subjection of the Queen's body to that of the institution of marriage advocated upon her by her husband who makes her abide by the patriarchal norms. The body of the Queen is brought under docility where she stops enjoying a relationship that turns sour because of its deep impact upon her soul. This docility is also assured by the Mahout to the King when the latter tells the King to learn from him the route that would ensure the physical submission of his wife. The King is also quite open in discussing those touches that worked like magic for his wife to the Mahout. The Queen also undergoes a miscarriage under the pressure of a disciplinary power that binds her to obey the rules that she can never relate herself to. To affirm the concept of sex being closely identified with the category of women, Butler holds the opinion that the sexualized features of her body turns out to be the major cause for the restrictions on her freedom. (Butler, *Gender* 27) The King forces her to perform a sacrifice even if with the cock made from dough and forces the Queen to give up her principles of non- violence. The King is ready to accept her even after her transgression which can well be sufficed by Kate Millet's opinion in her book *Sexual Politics* that romantic love affords the only circumstances in which the female is pardoned the sexual activity (37). The King loved his Queen. The King also meant to bring under his complete subjection despite his love for her. The Queen fails to breathe in the enclosures within which the King tries to bind her. Her inability to bear

a child falls down heavy on the Queen and much to her disapproval of the way it is turned for public ridicule. It is a social function required of women and as Butler affirms, they, "... ought to be fully restricted to the reproductive domain (Butler, *Bodies* 8). Bartky words," never sufficient unto itself" (29) relate to the hard fact to imagine how she can make herself accomplished or complete in front of others. It also affirms the social obligations required from women.

Wedding Album, a post- modern play, reverberates with the inability to break free from the shackles of age- old conventions. The institution of marriage forms the core of this play. Marriage has been an institution whose ideals have been nourished well nigh in our social set- up. This institution lends specificity to our social system and it is with this institution that we come to identify ourselves with. We shudder at the calamity that might befall on this institution. It is here that the tight rope of disciplinary power is fastened around an individual and precisely so, upon women. The Saraswat Brahmin household, of Nadkarnis, holds the cultural values in high esteem. Vidula's father expresses the typical Indian mind set towards the institution of marriage which is celebrated as well as feared in our society. Marriage and domesticity still seem to be the only salvation for women. The play opens where Rohit, Vidula's brother, shoots her on camera for her manipulated words and body movements are meant to be put up to the best of her abilities to the expatriate Ashwin, who resides in USA. Girls in our Indian society are made to train their bodies so as to appeal as amiable to the alien outsider according to the set norms of our society. The relations of power are felt much earlier than marriage itself for an average Indian female. Vidula's inability and lack of confidence is felt in the beginning of the play as her conditioning has been such wherein, she holds an

inferior opinion about herself. She accounts for her sitting ideal and opens up her mind to the boy she has never met before as if pleading for his approval over her inefficiencies. Her brother, Rohit, forbids her from speaking which might go against her in the proposed match. There is a very high amount of significance attached to marriage in our social system where the female is required to hold the prime responsibility to make it work. The words like ‘the whole truth’, ‘IQ’, ‘heredity’, and ‘cooking quotient’, (1.7) point to the discipline which a woman should attend to before entering into a marital bond. Vidula is easily accessible for Ashwin who is looking forward for a girl who might live a life according to the plan set by him and for which he finds Vidula as more than ready. Her middle- class values like ‘no boyfriends’, ‘no affairs’, ‘nice girl’ (1.9) are the accessories meant to be worn by her as part of her training to survive in the society. Vidula makes it a point to be precise in telling the details of her family and background to Ashwin.

FATHER. Marriage is a gamble. No escaping the fact- marriage is a gamble.

(9.89)

MOTHER. ... A wedding means expenses-there is no getting away from that.

(2.15)

ROHIT (offscreen). No. No. But cheer up. Look happy. Shall we start again?

(1.5)

ROHIT(offscreen). Why don't you smile a bit? Look cheerful. (1.5)

Chastity for sure stands on the same pedestal where it was during the old times. Wedding Album does not fail to present chastity as a time-honoured ethical

value required of every female. Vidula's cyber cafe visits raise doubts in the mind of the reader regarding her ethics. The playwright does not fail to present her as a female devoid of desire. Desire is again something alien for a woman. Vidula has to continue her life with the institution of marriage as her place of refuge. Ashwin does not hesitate to mention it to Vidula about the open kind of life he lived in USA and his ultimate bent towards time-honoured patriarchal values held close to his heart when considering a girl for marriage. Ashwin also puts himself at a higher pedestal in comparing himself to Vidula. No doubt he came to Vidula's small town as he called it to find innocence wedded to spiritualism. Marriage in our country is associated with spiritualism, the entire load of which is required to be on the heads of women. Ashwin already sets his conditions for Vidula who has no scope but to accept them and live under the conditions set for her. Later in the play she also mentions to leave eating fish as part of allegiance for her husband.

ASHWIN. ... My brains and my charm. As you know, we Saraswat Brahmans are brought up nice- to lay on the jam... (8.79)

ASHWIN. ... I am rich ... I have been a success beyond my wildest expectations. (8.80)

ASHWIN. ... Girl friends, affairs, mistresses, one-night stands. And on the public stage, glamour, success, social connections.... (8.80)

ASHWIN. ... Someone like you carries within you the essence of Hindu spirituality. Women as mother, Wife, Daughter. Womanhood as the most Sacred Ideal.... (8.81)

VIDULA (calmly). I'll never divorce Ashwin. (9.86)

VIDULA. Ashwin may not speak much. But he was clear about what he expected from marriage ... I agreed with him. I gave him my word.

(Pause) I have given up eating fish. (9.87)

Vidula's mother shows another side of this disciplinarian rule of the marriage norms. She is the woman who never felt the air outside the premises of her house. Her whole life had been dedicated in attending to her husband, raising children and attending to her kitchen. Vidula's mother, are the kinds who live in domestic slavery without being rewarded by the even slight mention of it. Domesticity as seen in the play seems to limit and leads to a stagnation in the life of a woman. Vidula's mother is very sure for elder daughter, Hema, not to suffer like her. She wants her daughter Hema to break free from the shackles of household and domesticity which the poor girl has been unable to, as it is she, who has to be the anchor in her husband's life so that he could be successful in the outer world. It is this tying down to hearth and domesticity that comes as a proclamation for the women which requires them to manipulate and condition their bodies so as to comfort their families. Marriage, family, children and the household are the 'enclosures' that a woman is wound up with and it is only rare that she steps out of the space allocated to her.

MOTHER. ... My father wouldn't let me finish college. And Hema arrived soon after. And then you all. I never had time for you children. Just rush and rush. And I achieved nothing in my life.... Has been content to be a housewife... But Hema did nothing with her intelligence and good looks. (9.90)

HEMA. ... Look at me- Melbourne, Johannesburg, Singapore, and now Sydney. Our men may get all top jobs. But I am in no better position than Ma. (2.17)

The character of the maid servant, Radhabai, speaks volumes about the servility to which a poor woman is made to live without the aid of her husband. Radhabai's daughter who, owing to poverty, was kept by a rich trader was later thrown on the road after the sudden death of that trader. Radhabai failed to find out her daughter. Being a destitute again comes off a punishment for the women who are not either well provided for or unable to come under the shelter of the institution of marriage. The play is suggestive of destitute women who not only suffer the pangs of hunger but unnameable atrocities at the hands of a society that runs according to the strict norms of patriarchy that leaves little space for them to exist in the micro relations of power.

RADHABAI. You can't keep a grown- up daughter at home, can you? (9.93)

VIDULA. ... So the mother and daughter met...But Radhabai wanted to keep her job, so she never mentioned her daughter to the family she worked for.... (4.52)

VIDULA. Yamuna. She was standing there in the street calling out to her mother. Her sari was in tatters. Her hair was loose and dirty. The kids were laughing and throwing stones at her (4.53)

Tapasya's character is that of a match suggested for Rohit, Vidula's brother. Marriage for Tapasya comes in the shape of a dictum passed upon her not only by her parents but also for the middleman who happens to know Rohit's family.

Tapasya is made to wait for a boy that she has never actually met or even decided on her own to marry and of course, her will has never been considered to be of any significance. Tapasya was earlier destined to be married to Ashwin by the elders. Marriage almost seems to appear as a market where girls are taken from one shop to another until a shop considers them fit to adjust. Rohit on his part has an affair with a Christian girl that he is never able to marry. Tapasya is forcibly thrust upon Rohit in a kind of arranged marriage by the elders of both the families. Gopal also enlists the pre-requisites for a girl to be considered for a good match. A rejection by Rohit would cost Tapasya a public humiliation as a woman's worth is measured by the value she gets as an object of man's interest.

MIRA. Govinda Rao wanted her to marry Ashwin. Now Ashwin is coming here to marry your sister.... (3.41)

ROHIT. Isabel! Thank god for your voice. I can't tell you what hell I have been through.... (3.41)

GOPAL. Just think of her position. She is not an uneducated girl. She has a First Class in MA in Sociology. She is a modern girl- educated and sensitive. How can you push her aside without a word? No, please, don't humiliate her like this. (3.38)

Foucauldian concept of discipline involves the imposition of discipline through the institutions. The institutions of marriage, family and society display a major impact on the excluded female. Bartky's describes the position of women in a heterosexual world, where they offer themselves as "object and prey" to their male counterparts (72). This not only ensures the easy accessibility of their bodies but also

makes them live their bodies in accordance with the norms set for them by the patriarchal norms. Chastity as a value has never stopped chasing a woman. Butler sees, gender identity as constituted in and around the incest taboo (Butler, *Gender* 99) which has not only held her body in subjection but also her soul. Also as suggested by Millet in her book *Sexual Politics*, the tag of the impure is inscribed on the woman with respect to “sexual function” (47) and this inscription has gained ground without locating itself to one place or country and this has also been something consistent markers for a woman round the world. Punishment is one of those disciplinary acts that Foucault considered it as internalised as it not only affected the body but reached its very soul. Punishment as a judgement is meant to regulate a body and cage its soul. Rani’s fear is internalised as it reaches her soul and she stands helpless at the sheer horror of its effect upon her body that may render her young pregnant body to ashes in case cut by a cobra. Moreover, Rani is held as a captive in her own house which is uncalled for situation. It goes against the very principles of an individual’s right to freedom of living. In the case of the Queen, in *Bali: The Sacrifice*, she is denied her right over her own body. Her miscarriage becomes a point of public ridicule. Motherhood is a very sensitive and a significant part of a woman’s life and it can not be achieved by putting a woman’s body to the test of time. Her one act of transgression becomes the cause of her death. Vidula’s cyber cafe freedom does not last for her as she is ready to obey the man she has never actually met before. Marriage as an institution is meant for not only the man but also the woman. There is no reason to deny a woman her way of life in a productive outcome for herself as well as her counterpart. Padmini’s sought are the ones held in derision by their open behaviour and a sensuous apprehension of their bodies. The

violation in the case of Padmini calls forth her death too and is an un-mourned one. Padmini, Vishhakha, the Queen and Vidula are the ones for whom Butler mentions the idea that various theorists have expressed regarding the soul and the body as consisting of distinctions where the soul also as analogous to the mind, not only sometimes subordinates the body but also leads to its escape from its embodiment. They are the sought who need a positive stroke from their companions to pursue the right path for making their marital life a successful journey. Devayani, Sharmishtha, Chitralkha and Swarnalata all belong to the category of “deficient bodies” (Bartky 71). The disciplinary laws, in the form of judicial pronouncements, if questioned with respect to their applicability, might fall short of their universalising appeal. Discipline as analysed in the context of the plays under consideration deprive the women of a liberty that is their right. It is observed that even the concept of chastity seems to work within the framework of a socio- cultural milieu.

Discipline presented subjects as objects (Foucault, *Discipline* 188). Body remains the primary target byway of objectification. Gender, is much politicised by way of judgment of “truth” and it bears the stamp of cultural approval. Discipline in the shape of punishment, surveillance, enclosure or captivity is a part of the discursive practices which have a lasting impact on the life of women. Women characters in the plays under consideration are given a realisation of their offence with respect to the truth prevalent according to the norms of society. A disciplinary punishment acts as a corrective and as in words of Foucault, “It normalizes” (Foucault, *Discipline* 183) and demands conformity. Repression and subjugation are brought about by disciplining the body. Discipline becomes a negative attribute of

power when those in power wield it to bring destruction upon others. Internalisation of prohibition becomes the quintessence of a disciplined body. As asserted by Foucault, “What I want to show is how power relations can materially penetrate the body in depth, without depending even on the mediation of the subject’s own representations.” (Foucault, *Power* 186) Discipline and power are interrelated. Enclosures, space and surveillance are the direct pointers towards the implementation of discipline which holds women in a mechanism of objectification.

Chapter – 5

Exploring Identity: An Interstitial View of Ethics, Self and Resistance

Michel Foucault's concept of resistance took birth from his concept of the relations of power. His work, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: 1* gives an account of Foucauldian notion of resistance. He stated that, “-Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power... there is no absolute outside ...” (Foucault, *History 1*: 95). The concept of resistance cannot be divorced from that of power. It is through and within the relations of power that resistance can be detected. Foucault considered it as an effect of power. As the relations of power are located in the fine interstices of a social network, so are the points of resistance which not only forms the effects of the relations of power but comes in as a handy tool to subvert these relations of power. Judith Butler considers the relationship of resistance and power as that of self- subversion (Butler, *Psychic 93*). Foucault designated resistances to be “irreducible opposites” (Foucault, *History 96*) that are present in opposition to power. Resistance comes off as a challenge to the relations of power. Resistances are not able to completely subvert the challenges put forward by power. Resistances are always plural. Foucault categorised resistances as possible, necessary, improbable, spontaneous, savage, conceited, rampant, violent, interested, sacrificial and quick to compromise. It is the trait of resistance that it is scattered in varying degrees. It may be confined to an individual or might be affected by a group of individuals. Foucault's essay “The Subject and Power” (Foucault, *Essential 126-*

144), enunciates both, the relations of power and as also power to be a specific strategic situation. Foucault refers to the enunciation of power through the concept of resistance. The Foucauldian notion holds these resistances as "transversal struggles" (Foucault, *Essential* 129) which, are not limited to one place or country but are applicable globally. The aim of these struggles is to promote the effects of power which aimed at a control over the body. These kinds of struggles are "immediate" signifying the existence of intricate pattern of relationships in the relations of power. As enumerated in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, the relations of power always accompany points of resistances and this accounts for these resistances to be instances of reality. Foucault does not fail to convey that these struggles do not have any possible solutions. Foucault writes in *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: 1* that there is no definite order in the distribution of resistance. Nevertheless, owing to their capacity to control the body and also their capacity to interrogate, these struggles question the status of an individual. Foucault is here referring to the similarities and the dissimilarities that could be accounted for owing to the difference in the status of an individual. The Foucauldian notion of resistance also ensures its opposition to power and knowledge. Resistance is an opposition to the mystification that a representation imposes upon an individual. Representation, as explained by Butler, enables to convey to us an assumption of truth about the category of women (Butler, *Gender* 2). Resistance also acts as a sound tool to question the misappropriation of power and knowledge. Foucault poses an important question that also forms an important aspect in the context of this thesis and which is "Who are we?" (Foucault, *Essential* 130) The question points to the concept of identity that comes to be associated with resistance.

It is a kind of recognition of one's identity with that of situations which the relations of power put one into. Resistance, then, is recognition of one's identity and an attempt to do away with what has been imposed. Foucault was of the opinion that resistance aimed at overthrowing the power and not the institutions. The laws of truth are imposed on individual by others who are made to oblige those laws. An individual is tied in submission to others. As suggested by Foucault, subjection and subjugation along with exploitation and domination have not ceased to exist. Resistance, according to Foucault, was not only the starting point for the relations of power but also determined the very understanding of these relations of power. We, as an individual, are enabled by resistance to understand the strategic situations that we are caught in under the circumstances. Resistance, by Foucault, was considered as a hostile strategy. In the context of the theses, the binary divisions of inequalities in gender are suggested by that of normal and the abnormal. The relations of power, the objectification of the abnormal by taking into account the normal in a patriarchal set-up, are analysed by the situation of the abnormal. The relations of power can be understood as a reality with respect to resistance. According to Foucault, it laid in the way that the instances of resistance attempted to dissociate the relation so of power. As, pointed out by Gary Gutting, "It is through revolt that subjectivity is brought into history" (Gutting, *Short* 90). The need for revolt or resistance arises from the fact that resistance is a direct indicator of our being trapped in power- relations. The words in quotation refer to the formation of an active subject as a result of resistance or revolt on his part. This is exactly, what is to be analysed in the context of the plays taken into consideration.

The chapter situates the thesis in the instances where the female characters, in the plays of Girish Karnad under study, try to escape out of their objectification. The chapter delves into the strategies through which the female characters resist the discursive structures, relations of power and the established forms of knowledge. The struggle of women, as implied, from the ideas of Foucault are the “transversal struggles” (Foucault, *Essential* 129) that can be accounted for without the distinction of place or situation. Such struggles cut through the barriers of any kind. The body in its entirety remains the target of these struggles. These struggles trap the body under subjugation in a very close- knit manner. In fact, the body with its impact, experience these struggles in its day to day life with the people and the institutions around it. That is why the extent and intensity of resistance depends upon the kind of discourses and the institutions within which, an individual, finds one self. Foucault does not suggest any long- term solutions to these struggles. Foucault was of the opinion that such day to day struggles harmed an individual.

As understood from Foucault’s analysis, any such struggle questions the status of an individual. The debatable point put forward by Foucault is that at one point, an individual separates out as a different entity from the others and at the same time this kind of splitting up, ties this individual to one’s own identity in a limited way. It, then, becomes needful to identify one’s existence in the relations of power. This results from the rejection of the disciplinary apparatus that leads to one’s submission and consequent objectification. It is also equally significant for an individual to recognise one’s freedom in the sphere of the relations of power. Resistance does not necessarily mean as allying oneself with the relations of power

rather it helps as an essential tool for the individual to break from the shackles of submission and to come out anew.

Further such an opposition to the relations of power is seen as an opposition to knowledge by Foucault. Knowledge has been related to truth by Foucault. For him, there is essentially no absolute truth. Our knowledge is sharpened by our idea of truth. The one who is placed under pressure in the relations of power has a chance of identifying the truth through resistance. Resistance holds opposition to a mystification of individuals which holds a strong point of discussion in the context of the present thesis. This struggle may not be scientific in its approach but it is also not alien to the laws of truth. It is due to this fact that knowledge derives its significance from the way it circulates and comes to be closely associated with power. Whereas resistance stands in opposition to power, it also stands in opposition to those allied with power and seeks their identification and accountability. Foucault's emphasis on resistance was not meant to change or diminish an institution but definitely to diminish the impact of power on the individual.

The control administered over a subject is resultant of such power. Resistance forms a sure tool in the understanding of the subjugation. The form of power that resistance in the present context intends to identify is the influence of institutions and family. It is quite imperative to quote Foucault's words on the importance of seeking identity, "Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse what we are" (Foucault, *Essential* 134). This signals towards what we can be in order to evade any kind of political label enjoined upon us and which is well nigh a reflection of the structures of power that binds us to their own accord. Foucault

clarifies the word political as “... the set of relations of force in a given society constitutes the domain of the political, and that politics is a more or less global strategy for co-ordinating and directing those relations” (Foucault, *Power* 189). Relations of power as such never come to shape due to any form of consent and so, resistance is bound to show up. It is resistance where the power of discipline in the form of punishment is put to hammer. Michel Foucault was of the opinion that power was affected through violence or any means even if not physical violence. He held passivity to offer an opposition to the relations of power. Foucault labelled the term “the other” (Foucault, *Essential* 138) in connection with the one over whom power is exercised and attempted to be maintained.

Gary Gutting has pointed out, “The interest, to invoke the archaeological analogy once more, is not the particular object (text) studied but in the overall configuration of the site from which it was excavated” (Gutting, *Short* 33). He continues, “... all we actually have access to are the surface effects... from which we must somehow infer what lies beneath” (Gutting, *Short* 32). This configuration leads to the formation of the text which accounts for the notions that we hold so strongly to our sense of understanding of ourselves as well as the world around us. (Gutting, *Short* 33) Gender- inequality is a part of that very configuration. An excavated site is the social set-up. The relations of power and the consequent resistance are the “surface effects”. (Gutting, *Short* 32) That very understanding of the notion of a free individual forms the basis of Karnadian plays whether male or female. The playwright endeavoured through his plays to free the individual from the discursive practices and institutions that imposed forceful submission upon them. Karnad

succeeded in tracing the submission of women since several centuries by putting his plays in the context of episodes taken from myths. It is this attempt to consider the possibilities of release of women from the enslavement that the discussion of the concept of resistance is found to be suitable while analyzing the female characters.

Resistance termed as “tactical shift and reversal” (Foucault, *History* 1:133) by Foucault and “rituals of normalization” (Butler, *Psychic* 83), as employed by the female characters to break from the harsh entrapments in the relations of power. There is an urge, on their part, to break free from the monotonous hold of the discursive strictures and practices. The female characters challenge the kinds of domination and break the monopoly of their objectification. The body by now is no more passive. Foucault stated that power is always accompanied by resistance. In his essay “Technologies of the Self”, (Foucault *Essential* 145-69) Foucault talked about the four major “technologies” (Foucault, *Essential* 146) out of which, technologies of power, which dominated the conduct of individuals and lead to their submission to different forms of domination. This accounted for, the objectivising of the subject. Turning back to the concept of resistance, this essay, also relates to the care of the self or more properly, knowledge of the self. Strategies of resistance erupt from the recognition of this care of the self. It is not only a realisation of the self but also a care of the self. Foucault explained the word “self” (Foucault, *Essential* 151) with respect to the notion of identity. He did not refer to self as possessing a physical visibility. Self, according to Foucault, related to the soul. A concern for our soul was primal for the concern of the self. As pointed out by Butler that “... power acts not only on the body but in the body” (Butler, *Psychic* 89). A soul could take care of the

self through contemplation. It aimed at justice, both ethical and political. The aim of the self can well be ascertained from Foucault's opinion that although, a knowledge of the self played a significant role in the care of the self but it should be accompanied with an awareness of other relationships also (Foucault, *Essential* 155). Butler terms it as "Reflective self- relation" (Butler, *Psychic* 22). Butler compares Foucault's concept of soul to that of 'psyche' (Butler, *Psychic* 2). Butler also affirmed that it was through psyche or the soul that an individual resisted one's regularisation. The care of the self and knowing oneself in relation to others leads one to shatter the iron walls of politics. Complete liberation is unachievable. Resistance is suggestive of certain significant improvements. It is the re- shaping of the relations of power that resistance can lead us to.

Foucault did not consider the role of domination as absent from the relations of power. Resistance as a strategic reversal can be analysed in the plays under study as refusal, rejection, transgression, cheating, elopement and suicide. They are both spontaneous, totally oblivion of any prior thought, and on the other hand, a well-thought out strategy in the recesses of the mind which is much visible in the context of the plays under discussion. Resistance, in the form of desire, a forbidden arena for women, is also well noted in the context of the plays. As well noted by Judith Butler, an attempt to curb a desire leads the subject to reflect on the self and finds its otherness in that reflection and it is here that the subject also starts considering itself as an object (Butler, *Psychic* 22). In the context of this thesis, it can then be stated that a continued consideration of the self, as an object, has long been installed in the psyche of women which they never attempt to come out of the space allotted to them

by the discursive norms and they continue to live a life with their objectified selves in silence. As pointed out by Butler, it is not about the repression of the desire, but the prohibition under which the bodies are placed and what has been analysed in the preceeding chapter related to discipline. It is imperative to quote Foucault with respect to docile bodies. He says, “The body that serves in docility, also constructs resistances” (Foucault, *essential* 360). It is this very prohibition that comes out to be the reflection of their quintessence (Butler, *Gender*183). Female characters, in the plays under study, are found to revel in their attempt to reach out to their desires. The kind of resistance as analysed in the plays is scattered. This can well be accounted for the inadequacy and disapproval meted out to the concept of emancipation of women in our society.

In the play, *Yayati*, Sharmistha, Devayani, Chitrlekha and Swarnalata are caught up in the meshes of the relations of power. Power is advocated by King Yayati both as a King and a man representing the un-formidable patriarchal authority. The female characters make attempts to dissociate themselves from the relations of power. This dissociation is resistance. A refusal from the blind adherence to the King’s orders at a certain point of time brings these female characters close to their identity. Sharmistha, doomed to serve Devayani, never accepted the regime of others. Sharmistha also resists her subservience to Devayani. She had been planning to overthrow Devayani for alienating her from her home. It is only Sharmistha who is able to understand the King, better than Devayani. Sharmistha is not only aware of her own odd situation inside the palace but also that of others. It is her only, who is able to steer the King out of his odd situation created by his misdemeanour. Sharmistha’s understanding of her own situation also shows her capacity to think

beyond the limits she is allowed. Sharmishtha does not reach her desired end without putting the vial of poison to her lips. This amounts to a certain degree of cheating on her part to win her case over the King. She enticed the King by declaring her will to end her life by consuming poison. She is able to win over the King who decides to make her his royal consort. Sharmishtha is not only able to win a position for herself in the King's palace but also makes sure to keep her words given to her father for never returning back home. Resistance for Sharmistha is the recognition of the self amidst the exclusion she is put into. It is her realization of her inner self that Sharmistha is able to refuse submission to the King.

SHARMISHTHA. ... But when the moment arrives, I shall recognize it and seize. And you will know too. You won't be able to shut your eyes to it. (1.11)

SHARMISHTHA. ...It turns that person into an animal. One's will is destroyed. One's self hood humbled into a grateful submission... I snarl because I want to retain a particle of my original self. (1.18)

SHARMISHTHA. ... At this moment I am in a position to bring the game to an end. (1.21)

SHARMISHTHA. I am not your slave, Your Majesty. I am hers. I have no need to be scared of you, ... If she doesn't. I shall run away. (2.25)

SHARMISHTHA. ... No, thanks, I must turn down your kind offer. (2.26)

SHARMISHTHA. Home I have no home. I have promised my father that I shall be your servant for life. (2.28)

Devayani had taken the abrupt behaviour of Sharmishtha for long. Devayani's fear of sharing the King in marriage proves correct. She at once decides to leave the King and the palace and retires to her father's house. Her jewellery, the symbol of her marriage to the King is taken off and thrown by her. Devayani desired pure emotions of affections from the King which she found lacking. She wastes no time as soon as she realised that she was a mere play thing for the man to whom she was so dedicated. Devayani refuses to share the King along with Sharmistha. Devayani decides to abandon the marriage which holds her in submission.

DEVAYANI. Let go of her, sir. Does my being here mean nothing to you?

(2.29)

DEVAYANI. ... I implore you now. I too can bare my fangs. I too can draw blood. Don't provoke me on account of this woman. (2.31)

DEVAYANI. I am no Kshatriya queen to suffer relatives foisted on me. I am leaving.... (2.31)

DEVAYANI. ... I came here without these trinkets. I shall go back without them (2.33)

The newly-wed Chitrlekha is taken by surprise. Her reaction to her situation is spontaneous. Chitrlekha, despite being new to the palace makes sure her old husband Pooru is shown out of her bedroom. She finds her unconsummated marriage in doldrums and feels betrayed by Pooru. Chitrlekha also makes it clear to Yayati either to take her in marriage or return the youth of her husband. Chitrlekha's life is that of a broken dream that remained unfulfilled and that too for no fault of hers. Chitrlekha submitted to Pooru for his youth and lineage. She decides to quit this

marriage as she finds her body incapable of submission to an old man. Chitrlekha is equally defiant to question King Yayati for his filial duties towards his son. Chitrlekha is left with no choice but to commit suicide. Her death is an eye opener for King Yayati who is made to realise his mistake at the cost of a death. When power takes the shape of an atrocity, it is bound to harm an individual in body and soul. For the female characters in *Yayati*, the central issue in Foucauldian terms "... is the type of power it brought to bear on the body and on sex..." (Foucault, *History* 1:47) and sexuality affected the body as "... a mode of specification of individuals..." (Foucault, *History* 1:47)

CHITRALEKHA. Please don't come near me. Go out. Please, please. Don't touch me ... (4.58)

CHITRALEKHA. Take him out. Right now. (4.58)

CHITRALEKHA. I will not let my husband step back into my bedroom unless he returns a young man.(4.61)

CHITRALEKHA. ... What about your duty to your son? Did you think twice before foisting your troubles on a pliant son? (4.62)

CHITRALEKHA. Sir! This is my chamber. Only my husband has the right to come in here without my permission. Or to shout out my name as he pleases. I am not aware I have allowed anyone else that freedom. (4.62)

CHITRALEKHA. ... And now you want me to meekly yield to your demands? (4.62)

CHITRALEKHA. I am here, this minute, sir. And I cannot interest myself in your unborn future. (4.64)

CHITRALEKHA. Foolish? What else is there for me to do? You have your youth. Prince Pooru has his old age. Where do I fit in? (4.66)

RANI. Don't ask questions... Embraces at night. The face in the morning unrelated to the touch at night... Don't ask questions. (2.51)

Rani's dialogue from the play, *Nagamandala* is reminiscent of her maturity towards the realisation of her objectification. It is here, when Rani's breathe starts stifling her mind towards the realisation of what exactly she is required to do by her husband. At this stage the poor woman is still unaware of the dangers that the unintended romantic excursion with the Naga awaits a bruising on her body as well as soul. Rani fails to see the difference of behaviour of two sides of her husband.

RANI. I was stupid, ignorant girl when you brought me here. But now I am a woman, a wife, and I am going to be a mother... (2.51)

RANI. Look at the way you talk-as if you were referring to someone else...Say my wife isn't a whore. (2.53)

RANI. What truth? Shall I say my husband forgets his nights by next morning? ... (2.54)

RANI. But the door... I had locked it from inside. And it is still locked. (A new thought occurs to her. Almost unconsciously she runs to the bathroom. Looks inside, it is empty.) Where are you? Where are you? (2.55)

RANI. But I have not done anything wrong. I am not guilty of anything. What shall I lead guilty to? (2.56)

RANI. Kurudavva-(2.56)

RANI. I am innocent, Kurudavva. I haven't done anything, what shall I do? (2.57)

RANI. No, I want the ordeal by the Cobra. (2.58)

Rani, who had been a mute object, abiding by the rules imposed upon her from time to time by her husband, is able to identify the inner beckoning of her heart when her body undergoes a major change with her pregnancy. Identity for Rani comes to the verge of its realisation with a resistance that sets out to question the conditions and the punishment that her body has to bear. Rani as an object is presented as a culprit before the entire village to be humiliated. Power has its impact in belittling an individual. Rani's stature of a mother makes her realise herself as a wife. She resists the punishment that is meted out to her for her unintended transgression. She decides her own punishment and her resistance is also in the way she puts herself ready for the punishment after overcoming her fear of death. It is in her decision that she is able to shed her ignorance of a young girl and comes off to maturity and self realisation. Rani also tries to find solace at the sight of Kurudavva who has lost hold of her senses as she lost her son. The sight of Kurudevva reminds her of the reality of her situation. Rani does not budge a bit from her belief in her own self of having committed any crime. She stands like a solid wall. The timid Rani turns into a strong-willed woman when she decides to take the cobra ordeal to prove her purity. Rani is able to identify her position in her husband's home. She walks

home with her reformed husband with dignity. In Foucauldian terms, Rani's confession amounts to, "... a knowledge of the subject; a knowledge not so much of his form, but of that which divides him, determines him perhaps, but above all causes him to be ignorant of himself." (Foucault, *History 1*: 70) Resistance for Rani was in her refusal to be ill-treated for the fault she never committed intentionally.

Resistance in the case of the female character of Padmini, in Hayavadana, lays bare the mystification of representation meted out to women in our social milieu. Padmini's resistance lies in her transgression. Words 'sati' (2.132) and 'pativrata' (2.132) uttered by Bhagwata in the play very well expresses this mystified representation of women in our society. Padmini felt incomplete as she desired the best of both men, Devadutta as well as Kapila. Desire for fulfilment is resistance for Padmini. Her desire of having the best of both is thwarted because her survival lies in submission. In, *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality Volume II*, Foucault has expressed that the moral self of an individual was seen as an important trait of his ethics. The moral ethics specified the identity of that individual. According to Foucault, the systems of power regulated the conduct of an individual. It is nothing different from what Foucault terms as the "repressive hypothesis", discussed at length in his work *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: 1*, that advocates a putting of silence around the discursive practices, as in the present context of study, the sexual conduct of Padmini. Here also the notions of inequality loom at large. Foucault stated about the governance of a wife by the males as a way to exercise "political" (Foucault, *History 2*: 216) authority. He also refers to "moral reflection" (Foucault, *History 2*: 22) that lacked a definition of the field of conduct and a domain of valid rules for both the sexes on an equal front. Further Foucault's

reference to “arts of existence” (Foucault, *History 2*: 10) point to the norms of behaviour that men set for themselves and for others. So, to say, the sexual conduct of an individual was problematised. In short, rules were envisaged upon the behaviour or conduct of an individual or groups of individuals on how to behave. While differentiating between the application of these rules, Foucault says, “For the wife belonged to the husband and the husband belonged only to himself” (Foucault, *History 2*: 147). So, for that matter only the conduct and behaviour of women were called into question. Foucault refers to moderation as a control over the self and related it as quite close to justice (Foucault, *History 1*: 81). Control over oneself is also a matter of concern for women and any deference from the set path is treated on moral grounds as a matter of legal concern. The “moral reflection” has never been considered by a social set up where only women are required to restrict and watch their space of conduct. Moral reflection is also a set attitude towards the conduct of rules prescribed for an individual by the ruling norms.

Padmini has been the object of moral interdiction. Her transgression is a serious offence. The prohibitions on the sexual conduct are problematised in a social set-up for a female. Padmini views her desire as her fulfilment. For her, this fulfilment is the very truth of her existence, even so, fallen according to the norms of the society. Desire is seen in relation to power. The legal aspect of power is mentioned to run behind the concept of power in its relation to desire. As stated by Foucault, flesh formed the root of all evil and right from the moments of transgression including the thoughts of desire catered to the word evil (Foucault, *History 1*: 20). A thorough overhauling of the soul with reference to an

understanding of desire is called for in the precepts put forward by Foucault. It is here according to Foucault that the discourse of every word uttered by an individual laid bare the desire it inhabited. Foucault suggested a ruling out of the possibility of the difference of treatment meted out in the relations of power concerning the sexual behaviour of the people. He also suggested a certain degree of changes in our attitude with respect to the relations of power, which, because of being unfixed in their nature, could be moulded to certain transformations to specify the code of conduct of an individual (Foucault, *History 2*: 99). The core of resistance lies in this idea as suggested by Foucault. He called for certain significant changes in our very attitude towards the conduct of each other which would guarantee a certain amount of freedom for an individual.

The female chorus, in the play *Hayavadana*, utters the possibility of the treatment of women on an equal front when it comes to desire. A male has no inhibitions in a society whereas all kinds of inhibitions are administered over a woman. A woman's body has to confront a kind of censorship on her moral conduct. Padmini does think with her head and is fully cognizant of putting a hold on her desire. Resistance on her part is not a revolt. It is more of a soul searching. It is with great difficulty that she is able to understand her own mind and situation. Padmini is aware of the moral code of conduct she is required to follow as per the norms of society. As pointed out by Butler, "For the subject to persist, the subject must thwart its own desire. For desire to triumph- the subject must be threatened with dissolution" (Butler *Psychic* 9). Padmini is led to her death due to her stubborn desire to have the best of Devadutta and Kapila.

FEMALE CHORUS. (Sings.) Why should love stick to the sap of a single body? When the stem is drunk with the thick yearning of the many-petalled, many flowered lantana, why should it be tied down to the relation of a single flower?... (2.132)

PADMINI. ...Yes, you won, Kapila. Devadutta won too. But I- the better half of two bodies-I neither win or lose..., may I sit here and look at you? Have my fill for the rest of my life? ... (2.126)

PADMINI. Why should one bury anything? (2.126)

PADMINI. They burned, lived, fought, embraced and died. I stood silent. If I'd said, 'Yes, I'll live with you both', perhaps they would have been alive yet. But I couldn't say it... (2.130)

PADMINI. The head always wins, doesn't it? (2.124)

The Fire and the Rain portrays the immediate struggles of Vishakha and Nittilai in the day to day life. The status of both these female characters is marred by the power politics played by the patriarchal network. Vishakha is not only wronged by her husband, Paravasu but also by Raibhya and Yavakri. Vishakha is sexually desired and maligned by these three men. Vishakha becomes the victim of 'sexual politics' (Foucault, *History 1*: 103). Vishakha uses her sexuality, as a weapon to outdo both Raibhya and Yavakri. Her resistance is in the form of depriving Yavakri of the drops of water that could have saved his life. Vishakha at this point of time is very well aware of the advantage that Yavakri took of her. Vishakha's open confession of her relationship with Yavakri in front of her father-in-law shows her

hatred for the lust that Raibhya had for her. Vishakha is a woman who had been molested by her father-in-law, Raibhya in her husband's absence. She had spent her life in loneliness and deprivation. For a certain time, Vishakha revels in her intimacy with Yavakri and for her it is her victory over the lust of the old man. Vishakha's life is clueless because Parvasu does not give her any anchorage.

Nittilai runs away from her house and marriage. She wanders from place to place. She comes across the wounded Arvasu. Nittilai decides to quit her marriage in order to take care of Arvasu. Nittilai not only takes care of the wounded Arvasu but also shows him the path to peace. Nittilai placed her love for Arvasu on a higher pedestal than her marriage. Neither is it a desire nor a transgression, it is pure love for which she listens to her conscience or self and decides her fateful path.

VISHAKHA. Let him go, Arvasu.(1.127)

(Calmly) Yes, there was somebody else there. Yavakri! And he had come to see me. Alone. (1.127)

VISHAKHA. No, Please! Don't do anything to him. It's my fault. Please, don't harm Yavakri. I'm willing to face the consequences-punish me. Not him. Please. (1.128)

VISHAKHA. Run, please. I've never asked anything of you till now. Just this once. Go. Run. (1.128)

VISHAKHA. Once you are safe, I'll happily watch that living corpse burn-
1.130)

VISHAKHA. ...Whatever you heard about Yavakri and me ...was no rumour.

(2.142)

VISHAKHA. ... But I am sick of silence. (2.141)

VISHAKHA. Refuse. He killed his father... Don't get involved in it. (2.145)

VISHAKHA. ...There has been enough bloodshed already... (1.145)

NITTILAI. I've run away. (3.151)

NITTILAI. From my husband. From my family. From everything. (3.151)

NITTILAI. ... I got up and ... ran all the way here. (3.151)

NITTILAI. And suppose he did tell you? What will that do for you? Haven't you suffered enough? (3.153)

NITTILAI. ... Look at your family... And now you in your turn want vengeance-where will it all end? (3.155)

NITTILAI. I'll disappear. Go and hide in the jungle. (3.161)

In the play, *Bali: The Sacrifice*, resistance can be seen as a way to overthrow the power that tries to subjugate the body. The Queen struggles to live her life in accordance with the principles of non-violence as well as her ideological rift with the King to whom she is married. The Queen feels her body in fetters of religious rituals and her relationship with the King is one of complete subordination. In her case, the King imposes the time-honoured customs on his wife and the continual reminder to her for an heir, weighs too heavy on the body of the Queen who is, at the same time,

exposed to public criticism. The Queen opposes a relationship that is meant to be mechanical as well as naked for the public judgement. She desired a husband's attention from the King but fails to find a fulfilment of her desire, 'to love you for its own sake' (95) as she vehemently calls it. Her resistance lies in her desire for finding that fulfilment in her intimacy to the Mahout and which she is not ashamed of, as according to her, the experience was not only beautiful but without conditions imposed upon her. The Queen resists violence and her act of transgression, invites more violence in the form of a sacrifice of a cock made from dough. The Queen answers this violence by plunging the naked sword inside her body. The life of the Queen is sacrificed for her failure to offer sacrifice for her sin of transgression. The Queen not only expresses her desire openly but also comes to the rescue of her body when the King unashamedly asks the Mahout of the vulnerable points to be touched on her body. She does hold out a promise not to be dishonest to the King ever again but she is adamant not to perform the sacrifice even if of a cock made from dough. The question here is not of punishment or sacrifice rather it is of giving up one's way of life to imitate in subjugation to that of others. This is what the Queen exactly refuses to do. As is clear from Foucault's account of the self, "Knowing oneself becomes the object of the quest of concern for self" (Foucault, *Essential* 125).

QUEEN. If u tease me, I'll go and tell Father. (89)

QUEEN. You're making fun ... I don't want to marry you. I'll go and tell
Mother. (90)

QUEEN. ...Then I could make love to you-for its own sake-to make love.
You don't Know how I have pined for that ... (95)

QUEEN. So you see, tradition can be given up. Or at least changed. (96)

QUEEN. ...What offerings will be considered worthy of a royal birth, do you think? (97) (No reply.) They say when you were born every inch of the earth for miles around was soaked in blood. (97)

KING. People exaggerate. (97)

QUEEN. Yes, you're right.... Just the thought of it. Of bloodshed ... (97)

QUEEN. This is a temple! You want to violate it? (111)

KING: But it's only dough. There's no violence in it. (111)

QUEEN. Do you realize that those words would sum up my life as well?
(112)

(Pause.) I won't take part in it. (112)

QUEEN. You want me to play your wife so that I can damn myself as an adultress? (113)

QUEEN. So I lost my baby because I didn't follow your mother's orders? Because I didn't kill and maim? (113)

QUEEN. I'll never agree to the offering. (116)

KING. ... But this right shoulder thing, this is new to me. (117)

QUEEN. Enough, sir. Please, you are making it worse for yourself. (117)

KING (ignoring her, to the Mahout). Any other... spots, ... (117)

QUEEN. Don't you dare. I am not a piece of meat for you to pick and paw at.
(117)

QUEEN. ... I do not regret anything that has happened. I will not disown him
or anything he gave me. (118)

A maid-servant Radhabai in *Wedding Album* learnt the value of saving the earnings of her labour and not allowing her husband to squander. Her realisation of the value of money in her own pocket and living her life on her own rather than with her inconsiderate husband is resistance on her part. Radhabai had learnt the art of living a peaceful life after a hard day's work. Radhabai's words about the Mother in the play are also significant about the latter's steadfastness to her space in domesticity. Mother had been an anchorage point for her husband and her children. Mother expresses her disagreement of the kind of interference that her husband's brother, Ramdas, had on their lives. Vidula's cyber sexual escapade is that one episode in the play that shows her other side. There is nothing dignified in her act but the significance of her act lies in the way she comes to protect her right to privacy when in conflict with the ruffian youth. Vidula is caught red-handed in the cyber cafe but she adopts the tactics of pretence of putting the entire blame on the youth. Vidula's sister Hema guides the latter not to accept total submission in front of her husband and must walk out of the marriage if need be. Vidula finds her true self in her union to Ashwin. Vidula is instructed by her mother not to waste her life by forgetting herself in her reproductive duties. Resistance finds its true meaning when Vidula shows her strong determination in keeping her marriage intact as her part of responsibility towards the same. Vidula's conduct, is one of total submission whereas she knows fully well that Ashwin wants a wife in the form of a puppet to follow his whims. Vidula's strategy lies in this very submission, a peaceful one to bring

peaceful existence of marriage. Vidula's gentle acceptance of the terms on which Ashwin wants her to live is a kind of peaceful resistance and worth appreciating where the wife intends transformation through humble devotion. As well suggested by Foucault, "We must not look for who has the power in order of sexuality...We must seek pattern of the modifications which the relationships of force imply ..."
(Foucault, *History* 1:99).

RADHABAI. ...The four paise I have saved here will go into his pocket and then he will throw me out again. I would rather lie down in a corner here and starve to death. (2.21)

RADHABAI. ... She is not the kind to bury her head in the palm of her hand.
(4.49)

YOUTH 1. Take out your camera,... Lady you are a disgrace to our ancient Indian culture ... (6.69)

VIDULA (her voice rising). I have paid for the computer time. I have paid to be Left alone in this room... You want to attack me. (6.70)

VIDULA. You saw it with your own eyes. They pulled away my dupatta ...
(6.71)

MOTHER (flies into a rage). I am sick and tired of your Ramdas. I regret the day I laid my eyes on him. (7.73)

HEMA. Leave him and come back if you feel like it... We don't want you to suffer in silence for fear of what people here will say... (9.86)

VIDULA. Look, you are always grumbling about how indecisive I am. This once I am going to be decisive... (9.87)

MOTHER. ... You are capable of anything if you will only make up your mind... Don't throw away your talent in just bearing children ... (9.90)

According to Sandra Lee Bartky, resistance comes along with the altering of an ordinary situation into an opportunity for struggle (19). Sharmistha Devayani and Chitralkha in *Yayati* endeavour to alter their situations against subjugation. This altering of the situation can be attained in our day to day life with its unnoticed and unwritten struggles of our existence. Resistance and struggle go hand in hand. I would like to raise the question asked by Bartky in this context. "Must the duty I have to myself (if we have duties to ourselves) always win out over the duty I have to others?" (20). The question is reminiscent of the significance of the care of the self in the form of resistance and an awareness of the need to know one's own self in order to have a better understanding of the world around one's self. The question is also significant as it raises the issue of denial seen to hold a prominent place in the plays where the lives of the female characters are concerned. Women live a life of denial not only to obey the dominant norms of patriarchy but also to give up their own comforts and desires over that of their male counterparts. Rani in *Nagamandala* is not only denied the right to freedom to move out of her house but the poor girl sits alone waiting for Appanna and serves him food. Rani spends her days and nights unquestioningly alone in the locked house till destiny brings Naga in front of her. Vidula in *Wedding Album* forgets her initial life in her parents' home and even

changes her eating habits to please her husband and so does her sister Hema, who denies herself the right to live her way of life.

Bartky talks about a 'feminist consciousness' (21), which is an awareness of a woman's situation of herself as a 'being' in conflict not only with the world but also with its own self because of a continual victimization. The situation might differ but the suffering is same. Bartky continues that the very existence of a woman's 'being-in-the-world' (21) is a resistance in itself. She talks about the ambivalence in relation to the social situation which a woman has to encounter as a part of her day to day struggle. These struggles test her capacity to persevere. As can be analysed in the plays under study, the female characters might be different characters from different plays but they voice the similar sentiments and emotions of an ordinary woman caught up in the meshes of a social reality that she fails to comprehend and at the same time is unable to find a suitable vent to her angst. A woman also feels herself lost in a society which fails to assign a significant space to her without a stiff struggle. Woman, for Bartky, remains an outsider, in the relations of power (21). Bartky points out the 'pockets of resistances' (81) as confined to that minority of women who tread on the path of self-determination (81). There is incoherence, with regard to the resistance seen amongst women. It is because with the passage of time very few women think of living their life according to their own whims. Bartky contended that even these independent women fall more profusely under the gaze of the patriarchal eye and the objectification of these women continues (81). Defiance on the part of women, continue to be a reason for their objectification. The Queen in *Bali: The Sacrifice* was under the continuous gaze of the King, the Queen Mother

and the inmates of the palace. As soon as the Queen follows the bickering of her heart and her fleeting emotions gather wings of fantasy and touches the forbidden walls for which she comes under the harsh scrutiny more than before. The King tries to attack this self-determination of the Queen by making her adhere to the sacrificial rite of killing the cock made of dough. It is her soul that the King tries to shatter by making her obey his ritualistic beliefs. The King does not admit lapses on his part but is quick to point out the weaknesses of his wife. Bartky calls it a paradoxical situation. Resistance, as understood from the perspective of Bartky, itself becomes the cause for objectification. It might be attributed to the inefficacy as also insufficiency of an open space allocated to women. Bartky also held the opinion that there was a lack of 'positive stroking' which is a major reason for the emotional frustration in women (100). Queen in *Bali: The Sacrifice* had a pretentious husband who used sweet coated words of romantic love for her but was actually himself in dilemma with respect to the right kind of conduct in life. The King's undue pressure on the Queen for a mechanical attitude towards the reproductive duty of the Queen forces the latter to lose sight of substantial love with its true meaning. The alienation of the Queen from her husband and her marital vows is a result of the eruption of the continued angst being built up inside her. It is a result of her alienation from an artificial colour of her marriage surrounded by the sacrificial rituals held dear by the King and as learnt from his mother, the Queen Mother. The Queen feels deprived of her rightful place in her husband's palace and lives in a dark dungeon of emotional deprivation. Rani in *Nagamandala* is deprived of this 'positive stroking' as she is left by herself and kept in the house as a machine. Rani's continuous pleading of her being frightened at night all alone signals towards the lack of some positive response

from Appanna. Celibacy continues to remain a prime requirement for emancipation. As pointed out by Foucault, “Adultery has always been defined within the precincts of the marital status of a woman” (Foucault, *History* 1: 147) And as for Foucault’s views on the moral reflection with respect to the two sexes, he says, “... it was an elaboration of masculine conduct out from the viewpoint of men in order to give form to their behaviour.” (Foucault, *History* 2: 22)

Bartky’s account of feminist consciousness is not all dark. She considered the importance of a “raised” (21) consciousness over that of the dark one. Bartky inspires every woman to take a fair view of her life. She guides women not to hate themselves just because they are hated by others. It is taking a fair account of ourselves in relation to our social reality and endeavours to come to terms with what is best for us. It is also a realisation of her true worth by a woman irrespective of what others consider her. Bartky, through such a type of resistance, is signalling towards a change in the social milieu from the perspective of a woman. It is women who have to hold out a promise to their own selves for a rational change and that accounts for resistance in the true sense of the term.

Sheila Rowbotham considered the oppression in the institution of marriage to that of other institutions. According to her there was nothing different between the private and the political in the context of marriage as an institution (46). The plays, under study depict such a spectacle of the institution of marriage where the patriarchal norms manipulate and manoeuvre the body of the female according to the norms set for their subjugation. Sharmistha and Devayani are subjugated by King Yayati to satisfy his lust. Chitrlekha is expected to surrender herself in front of her

decrepit husband, Pooru. The male characters manipulate their ways to extract from women what suits their purpose. Rowbotham also held the Marxian thought of the economic independence of women to free her body from any kind of subjugation (64). The suggestions, in the play in *Wedding Album* by Radhabai about the way she safely keeps her hard-earned money of her labour point to the economic independence of women. Mother in the same play also point out the significance of honing one's talent and of moving out of the circumscribed space, that is four walls of her house, to her daughter Vidula. In the context of Padmini in *Hayavadana*, Rowbotham's reference to the term 'Nymphomania' can be taken into account. According to her, a woman who felt sexual desire was abandoned (66). Women like Padmini or Radhabai's daughter face ill-treatment in society and such women even lose their dignity in society. Even Rani in *Nagamandala* and the Queen in *Bali: The Sacrifice* is reprimanded for following the forbidden path. Foucault in his concept of 'repressive hypothesis' (17), talked about the limitations of sexuality which are held in derision outside the boundaries of a marriage relation (Foucault, *History* 1:38). Foucault further held the opinion that it was not just the limitation of the expression of desire outside the range of a marriage relation but also a projection of this same desire as an act forbidden and punishable within the norms set in the society. It becomes a punishable offence as power relations hold it under repression and coat it with the term 'taboo' (Foucault, *History* 46). Sexuality as stated by Foucault in the repressive hypothesis is the greatest instrument of the manoeuvring of the female body and also a strong strategy of repressive hold of the power relations over a woman's body. As noted by Kate Millett, the patriarchal circumstances and the belief system have a negative impact on a woman's self and this is said to have a deep

impact on her body as well as existence. Millett also held the opinion that a sense of impurity was attached to the sexual functions of a woman (47). The moralizing of sexuality was actually an excuse to subjugate the body. According to Millett, a woman was only excused from the negative reflection of her sexual activity with respect to the romantic love (37). With respect to the female character of Devayani, Sharmishta, Chitrlekha, Swarnalata, Rani, Padmini, Vishkha, Nittilai and the Queen, Butler's 'unhappy conscious' (Butler, *Psychic* 46) can be discussed with respect to these characters. Butler relates it to the stoic attitude of giving up things including one's own self (Butler, *Psychic* 49). As said earlier what is the self or soul for Foucault, is the psyche for Butler. The female characters undergoing subjugation and objectification enter the phase of self- realisation only after that of an unhappy state of consciousness. It amounts to the pressures exerted by the relations of power and its impact on not only their body but also the self, where the 'stoicism' and 'renunciation' happen to coalesce. Devayani is unable to contain the situation where King Yayati brings her slave Sharmishtha on an equal pedestal in order to fulfil her lust for the latter. Sharmishtha, on her part, is unable to bear the isolation and hatred meted out to her inside the palace. Sharmishtha's lives an aimless life without any single supporter around her. Chitrlekha is unable to bear the consequences of her husband's self- invited decrepit age. Chitrlekha has no say in the decision of her husband when it is actually going to affect her life also. Swarnalata is full of grief both for herself as well as her husband over the issue of her purity. Rani's grief knows no bounds when her unintentional transgression earns her the allegation of a fallen woman, that too, in front of the entire village. Padmini is unhappy as she finds it impossible to attain the unattainable, the best of both Devadutta and Kapila.

Padmini's remorse is a shattering of her desire for both men. Vishakha also has a similar fate although she is unable to bear the selfish attitude meted out to her by her husband, father-in-law and her lover. Nittilai is overcome by remorse as she is married off to someone else as Arvasu fails to reach at the appointed time. The Queen is unable to handle a pretentious marriage which she is unable to live from her heart. The Queen lives an unhappy life with the King. Butler considers the role of psyche as effective in the expression of resistance. Although at the same time, Butler talks about the un-escapable nature of the unconscious from the relations of power. (Butler, *Psychic* 88) As asserted by her, norms affect the psyche. Resistance as understood in Butler's sense is when the mind is able to overcome not only the body but also conjures up occasionally "a fantasy of fleeing its embodiment altogether". (Butler, *Gender* 17)

As pointed out by Rowbotham, even the revolutionaries who held high ideals and the fervour to change the society, did not consider the question of equality for women in accordance with their revolutionary ideals (77). Men fail to identify the freedom or a certain space for women because however high the other ideals might be, there are no other ideals set so far with respect to the positions of women in patriarchy. What more could be expected from ordinary men in the day to day life. Parvasu and Yavakri, in *The Fire and the Rain*, are shown as daring adventurers. Both defeat the Gods by their strong determination to achieve but none of them consider it important to give Vishakha her rightful place. One is silent to her sufferings whereas the other victimises her to make his selfish end meet. The Naga in *Nagamandala* is able to love Rani from his heart but does not come to the forefront when she is publically ridiculed and dragged by her husband Appanna. Rani with her

pregnant body has to bear the marks of wounds when she is slapped and dragged by Appanna. Rani suffers body and soul over the issue of deciding the ordeal for herself. This struggle is for her to face. The Naga cannot evade the questioning public for her where she has to stand alone and answer her unintentional guilt.

What is resistance then? It is the changed mode of thinking. It is a practice of the self. As a part of ethics, resistance results when one forms oneself as a subject of morality while being aware of the norms as a part of the form of knowledge that one acquires once one sets out on the path of self-knowledge. Whereas, discipline ensures docility from the subjugated body, it is through a knowledge of the care of the self as an efficient weapon that an individual is able to offer resistance to the subjugation. For the female characters in the context of the plays under discussion, discipline, in the form of panopticon of an ideal household forced upon them as only their prime responsibility, resistance is a way out towards a realisation of oneself in relation to others. Resistance is a battle fought between an imposed identity and reflexivity which is self-identity and a coming to terms towards a realisation of one's identity. While positing Foucault's stance Oksala writes, "His histories are not about past, they're about us, today, how we could be something else. (Oksala, *How*11)

As visible from the context of the plays under consideration, the female characters gape out their mouth when the disciplinary apparatuses attempt to deprive them of their own breathing space. In the play, *Yayati*, Sharmistha, Devayani, Chitrlekha and Swarnalata follow the path of refusal to acquiesce. Sharmistha achieves this by a realisation of not only her 'self' but as a spiritual guide for king Yayati. Devayani rejects the king in favour of her self-declared freedom and a refusal

to adhere to a marriage that is shorn of respect for the institution of marriage. Chitralkha, too young and inexperienced, denies herself the right to live if it is not in accordance with her whims. Swarnalata continues life as such by fending herself. She is the type of women who show resilience in the face of odds. In *Nagamandala*, Rani does not stir from her faith in her being innocent as the writer does after all convey her innocence in what is said to be transgression in the eyes of others. *Hayavadana* gives a tragical dimension to the desires of Padmini. Padmini remains reluctant till the last and does not give up her attempts to acquire both Devadutta and Kapila. In *The Fire and the Rain*, Vishakha puts on a stoic attitude towards her husband's absence and her father-in-law, Rabhaiya's lustful eyes on her. Vishakha considers it best to abandon her home and her life with her husband, Parvasu. Her going into oblivion is actually her resistance towards a realisation of her self. Nittilai runs away from a place from where she fails to locate true love. Nittilai rejects her husband in favour of Arvasu, her lover. She does not leave Arvasu's side till her painful death. In the play, *Bali: The Sacrifice*, Queen does not give way to her faith even when time and again she is made aware of the futility of her belief in non-violence. She lived and died for her values of non-violence. *Wedding Album* looks at the resistance in the form of a self awareness in the technocrat world where the female characters like Vidula and Hema are aware of their significant place in the institution of marriage. Both are aware of the value of economic independence. Even Radhabai gives up filial relations to continue in employment. Rohit's wife, Tapasya, carries on her household life as the readers are informed towards the end of the play. In fact the life of women like Tapasya tending to their household without being aware of what their husbands are outside the house, leads the views about resistance to another level of thought. To

quote Butler, “Resistance is thus located in a domain that is virtually powerless to alter the law it opposes (Butler, *Psychic* 98).” It is because of resistance never outside the confines of power that it does not succeed in bringing effective laws into operation.

The relations of power are recognised through a resistance. Infact, there occurs, a significant range of variation and possibilities of resistance within the field of the relations of power. Foucault talked about the limited possibilities of resistance in the relation of power (Foucault, *Essential* 35). It is due to the fact that resistance has no exteriority and it has its opaque existence within the meshes of power. Butler also contended that resistance is ineffective. This does not rule out the possibilities of the instances of resistances. Resistance operates within the prohibitions set by the relations of power. A body might be disciplined to docility but the knowledge of the consideration of the self and a care of the self leads it towards forming a certain attitude to struggle and which happens to be resistance. Resistance, according to Foucault, cannot operate outside the law. The norms set up by patriarchy are the laws made for the excluded or the abnormal. In this capacity, it fails to break and is able to administer only a certain weakness or a discontinuity in the workings of the relations of power on the body. Foucault does not suggest any possible solution through the “immediate struggles” (Foucault, *Essential* 129). It only acts as a check on the further proliferation of that control by power.

In his reference to the resistance, Foucault talks about the questioning of the status of an individual through his individual struggle. This comes in the shape of undermining what comes in the way of the expression of one’s identity or true self. It

allows for a passage of truth to prevail. In doing so, it undermines the effects of power and the privileges of knowledge. Women, ought to develop a 'consciousness' (Bartky12) and a radical 'change in behaviour' (Bartky12) and a desire for liberation. Resistance, then, is not just a revolt or a struggle but an encounter with one's state of being and a possible way to for the self to know itself. As asserted by Foucault that "... power is 'always already there', that no one is never 'outside' it, that there are no 'margins' for those who break with the system to gamble in." (Foucault, *Power* 141)

Power contains resistance within itself. Resistance is rarely able to break the confines of power. Resistance is a strategy to overthrow power. If power is a strategic situation, resistance is a struggle to deal with that situation. The concept of resistance as understood from the above enumeration does not mean destruction of anything except an overhauling of the institutions that operate submission of a body by means of power relations. Resistance in the form of transgression as analysed in the plays is definitely not any justification for those acts but seen from the perspective of breaking the objectification and finding a relief from one's suffering through a conscious realisation of one's situation is considered as essential.

Conclusion

The thesis endeavoured to see that emancipation has not reached the depths of our society. The continuation of gender politics has not made it possible to achieve a satisfactory level of emancipation for women. Gender equality, as a basic human right, not only needs a consideration but a thorough revamping of our social set –up to include the rights of women as an essential requirement in their life as much as in the lives of men. The objectification of women continues, resulting in their victimization, both in body and soul. Women fail to find a dignified place in the day to day life.

Girish Karnad was a visionary who envisioned a break away from the ills of society. Karnad's plays are a running commentary pointing out the discrepancies in our social set up. In addition to the varied forms of oppression in our society, Karnad's plays do not fail to convey the marginalised treatment meted out to women in our society and a consideration for them as essential section of our society.

A Foucauldian approach caters to the matters of everyday life that are embedded in our culture. The Foucauldian notion of body as the discursive site of suffering has been co-related to the representation of female characters in the select plays of Girish Karnad. Gender equality is a “political” (Foucault, Introduction, *Essential* ix) issue. The Foucauldian approach also gave a chance of looking at the indigenous plays from a foreign lens. A Foucauldian approach opens our observation as well as thought process while determining the inequalities prevalent in our own social set- up. Michel Foucault and Girish Karnad voiced the similar concern of breaking away from the conventions and giving a unique place to the life of an

individual so as to imbibe one's lived experience in its entirety. Undoubtedly, our Indian way of life ushers in a traditional setting but still, there are aspects in our traditional values that raises questions in our mind and the choice of Girish Karnad's plays, encompassing myths and folktales, containing the gist of our ancient traditional culture, just gives us a chance not only to question those obsolete values but also refurbish our way of life towards our betterment.

The Foucauldian ideas have been infused in the thesis as sound tools to analyse the problematics of body as experienced by women in a patriarchal social set-up. Gary Gutting observes, "He always had an interest in and sympathy for those excluded by mainstream standards" (Gutting, *Short* 5). Gutting continues to enumerate the motive behind Foucault's oeuvre that, "... developed into a strong personal commitment to oppose the normative exclusions that define our society". (Gutting, *Short* 5) The same has been analysed in the select plays of Girish Karnad. Karnad was not only a prolific writer but a strong voice in the genre of drama as a vibrant medium of questioning the age-old conventions of society. Karnad had a soft heart and a serious concern for the marginalised. Foucault's attempt to use his writings as a "toolbox" (Gutting, *Short* 6) to be utilised by those struggling for social and political transformation" (Gutting, *Short* 6) meet rightly so in the plays of Girish Karnad which are under consideration in the thesis. The thesis attempted to study the situation of women who are not only marginalised in the patriarchal society but also find themselves excluded and left out in the matters of day to day life, bearing public as well as personal significance. The discussion on gender- inequality and the inefficacy of emancipation was taken into account while considering the premises of

Foucault with respect to the objectivising of the subject and what he termed as “dividing practices” (Foucault, *Essential* 126). He held the view that the subject was objectivised when either divided inside him- self or from others. The thesis discussed this objectivising of the female characters as excluded through the “dividing practices”. The categorization of the normal set against the abnormal initiated the thesis into motion.

The female characters are analysed in the relations of power. The Foucauldian premises do not attempt any theoretical concept of power rather it is about the analytics of power. The present thesis administers the analysis of the states of domination with respect to his concept of power. The chapter on the Problemtisation of Identity: Disempowered Karnadian Female Characters takes up a formulation of the issue of identity as a problematisedone. The chapter sets out to analyse the need for emancipation wherein the role of a woman in her life is established through the imposition of an identity according to the set norms of society. The life of a woman revolves around breathing through a body that is submerged in the norms dictated to her. Gender- inequality is a result of this curb on her freedom that is denied to her identity in the day to day life. Butler affirms in *Gender Trouble*, “Gender was produced through bodily acts so it was construed the issue is the body” (Butler, *Preface* xv). It is not just the body but also the psyche that undergoes submission where one’s self- identity is marred. The chapter Objectification through Discourse: The Silenced “Other” considers the female body as objectified by way of failing to find a voice in the relations of power. The inequality is rampant in the social practices that are made effective through the distribution and restrictions imposed

upon discourse. As asserted by Bartky, “Female subjectivity is constructed through a continuous process, a personal engagement in the practices, discourses, and institutions that lend significance (value, meaning and effect) to the events of the world (Bartky 118)”. The chapter Objectification through Discipline: Female Characters and Surveillance constitute the lack of dignity with respect to women as observed in the idea of discipline as a way to control and mastery of the body. The chapter Exploring Identity: An Interstitial View of Ethics, Self and Resistance tries to figure out a possible way to undo the knots in the relations of power. As such, the relations of power with respect to identity, discourse, discipline and resistance have been discussed in detail while remaining within the framework of Foucauldian precepts.

The thesis starts with the idea of identity as considered insignificant for a woman’s existence in a male dominated world. Identity for them has been lost and the female characters encounter their lost identity with an angst built up inside them. It is this encounter with one’s identity under subjugation that a need for emancipated self is required to be implemented in the life of a woman. Foucault suggested “political economy” (Foucault, *Reader* 172) as a control and mastery of one’s body through the micro- physics of power” (Foucault, *Reader*176) which aimed at the distribution of power rather than its concentration at only one end. Discourse, as a putting up of a cover of silence, on their use of language and unable to voice their opinions in the day to day life is seen through the denial of voice to the female characters in the plays under study. Discipline as a power holds the body in submission. The existence of a female body in docility, surveillance and a panopticon existence are discussed with respect to the female characters of the plays under

consideration. A doing away of “body politic” (Foucault, *Reader* 175) would ensure a release of the body held in subjugation through discipline while refusing to succumb to cultural inscriptions. Resistance accounts for the coming back to the concept of identity through a rejection of what has been put on them as a norm to follow. Resistance is understood to be associated with identity through the concept of the care of the self. It is not just the body but a care of the soul that calls for a realisation of one’s identity. One’s identity is one’s self. Resistance is the outcome of the possible tactics that the female characters employ to come out of the regime of power. Resistance has not been in the form of a concerted action. It is, scattered and even goes unnoticed in the general flow of everyday life.

In Foucauldian terms, it is our dealing with errors in the shape of misbehaviour, misconduct and falsity and through Foucauldian sense of politics, one is able to understand not only the ‘truth’ associated within the networks of society but also to arrive at a suitable know-how through a self-critique. As pointed out by Gary Gutting, “I am able to respond to issues it raises in my own way, or more precisely, in a way by which I will define what I, as a self, am in my historical context (Gutting, *Short*100). The female characters in the plays of Girish Karnad choose to oppose and not to acquiesce.

Gender-inequality is reflected in the insignificance of identity that finds its deepest expression in the destructive effects that norms in our cultural set-up pose for women in their day to day life. It is the culture that shapes our image with respect to ourselves and others. An individual is defined and mapped as a part of the culture that he or she inhabits. In the case of women, they encounter subordination by the

male counterparts. The Karnadian plays under consideration show women as being caught up in situations not of their own making rather which are created for them. The female characters are denied the right to be a free individual. As in the well-founded words of Simone de Beauvoir, in the introduction to *The Second Sex* express the opinion, “My idea is that all of us, men as well as women, should be regarded as human beings” (Author’s Introduction lii). Women have always found themselves trapped in the objectification lent to them by immediate social relationships that they are placed. It is just like what Sandra Lee Bartky wrote, “I must be made to see myself as they see me” (Bartky 27). Women have always been induced to live a life as inscribed upon them by others who happen to be their superiors in the immediate relations of power. She can recognise only those aspects in her personality which others find fitting enough to be as desirable by the prevailing norms of society. Foucault talks about the impact of exclusion on soul as much as on the body. It also connects to “psychological oppression” (Bartky 29) that Bartky refers to with respect to women in which a woman is affected internally in the day to day treatment meted out to her. A woman, in the course of time loses hold “of her essential attributes” (Bartky 29) as she is made to act and behave quite contrary to her real self. Women do not have any say concerning the matters of day to day importance in family. The workings of power influence the construction of identity through discourse, discipline and finding an outlet in the resistance that is scattered. All of these are very much imminent as the body forms the site for the discursive practices.

Rani, in *Nagamandala* is aware of her identity as she lives under the impact of what Appanna, her husband imposes upon her. Sharmistha and Devayani in *Yayati* stifle under the impositions laid upon them by King Yayati. Padmini, in *Hayavadana*,

loses her 'self' as soon the heads of Devadutta and Kapila gets switched over. Vishakha and Nittilai in *The Fire and the Rain* are forlorn and live a meaningless life. Swaranlata and Chitrlekha find their identities confused at the threshold of situations far beyond their control. The Queen in *Bali: The Sacrifice* finds her identity in a fluid state not knowing which course of action to follow. Vidula, Hema and Tapasya in *Wedding Album* are happy with their lot. Language and freedom of expression is again a forbidden arena for women. Sharmistha in *Yayati* is scorned at for the same. Devayani's tongue is tied in her affiliations to the King and the sanctity of the marital bond. Swarnalata is abandoned for speaking the forbidden truth and Chitrlekha is led to her death for the same. Discipline, through docility, promises a safe haven for the female characters. Devayani, Sharmistha, Chitrlekha and Swarnalata are required to behave according to the set norms of society. The Queen in *Bali: The Sacrifice* is forced to submit by acquiescing to sacrifices. Male authority disciplines and guarantees a particular demeanour from Vishakha and Nittilai in *The Fire and the Rain*. Vidula, Hema and Tapasya accept docility on their own accord as this is what they have learnt while growing up what it means to be a woman. Resistance is not totally absent as analysed in the plays under study. It is with difficulty that resistance is able to come out of the vicious circle strengthened by the relations of power. Resistance, as understood in this analysis, is trying to break the gap between the relations of power. As suggested by Foucault, power cannot be done away with. The thesis by no means signals towards a matriarchal society. The thesis is an attempt to bridge the gap between the social relations with respect to power for any individual to desire as well as live a life towards one's betterment. The aim is to diminish the effects of power.

The Foucauldian analysis of the female characters in the plays of Girish Karnad aimed not only to highlight the 'politics' in the day to day life of our social existence but also endeavour to bring about a metamorphosis in the status of women at 'micro level'. Foucault aimed at a progressive society freeing it from ills that imprisoned an individual barring him or her to life well- deserved. Girish Karnad, as a playwright had attempted to question the day to day politics. History of any society is not just looking at the past but it is also to make the present worth remembering in future. Myth and the traditional values that abound in it should be employed to serve as niche for the betterment of an individual and that of the society.

Girish Karnad's stature as a writer and analysed in this humble attempt in the thesis is that of a visionary who seek to inculcate a new 'political economy'(Foucault, *Reader* 172) that aimed at settling a new set of ethical values that applied in equal measures to both men as well as women. His plays are a search for the truth to establish meaningful and substantial values churned from the traditional and the modern contexts. A woman's life is an ongoing campaign till she is purged of from all that is obsolete and she too, finds herself placed in the networks of social fabric as a human being, in her own right and not just the 'other', a woman.

After understanding the thematic concepts of the plays under consideration, the Foucauldian analysis has endeavoured to question the ways of thinking with respect to the place of women in society and a discussion of the issues of gender-inequality and their emancipation in the real sense of the word. As Rowbotham rightly pointed out, "Because some women have become privileged they think the liberation of all is completed (Rowbotham 205)." A practice of the self with respect

to ethics is suggested wherein moral rules are problematised and then through resistance are altered and adopted to a changed way of thinking.

The analysis of the plays of Girish Karnad under the guiding principles of Michel Foucault's precepts has led to the following findings. Where is emancipation? Certainly, not in the large- scale female foeticide, domestic outrage or even in the undue captivity of young brides inside the four walls of the house. Complete or even adequate emancipation can only be brought by letting a woman live her day to day life without being burdened with the identity that those in power intend to subjugate her with. A woman lives her life with an imposed identity, a kind of role- playing and whereas an identity for a man lies in his essential masculinity, the same can be allowed to a woman to function in her essential femininity. Again, femininity should not be taken as an inherent weakness and her abilities should be allowed a full exercise, no matter to what extent she is able to succeed. The answer to gender- politics lies in an acceptance of the individual's identity and also an acceptance of the significant role of a woman not only in the life of a man but for society as a whole. An equal participation of a man and a woman on an identical pedestal is the key to change the society for good. Foucauldian analysis always stood for an individual's freedom and freedom is all that matters. An individual's liberty and freedom are the basic human rights and the same should not be denied to women. The working together of legal framework is a must to save our degenerate social set- up from further damage. The scholar has given a further scope for the same in the field of legal studies. Girish Karnad plays are an indictment to the lack of respect given to women in our society. A woman can claim her dignity and respect through resistance which is not necessarily a revolt but rather an attempt to bring a change and an

improvement. Foucault's notion of the "self" (Foucault, *Essential* 151) and a concept of "the care of the self" (Foucault, *Essential* 151) are closely related to identity and embarking upon an individual to take care not only of one's body but also of one's soul. It is a way to break the codes of objectification and also to claim a life full of righteousness and integrity. Bartky's doubt regarding "raised conscious" (21) should not be taken in a negative sense. Self-awareness of her conditions is a must for every woman. Resistance will not be for long, considered with a raised brow. It will definitely be considered as an answer to the atrocities to which women are subjected to. To educate oneself about one's rights, is not a revolt. Gender-equality should be about gender liberation. The thesis does not in any form propagate patriarchy. The thesis insists on the Foucauldian thought that it is not possible to do away with the relations of power. One can certainly diminish the differences in the relations of power. The thesis, is also a call for those unheard and unseen subjugated beings in the history of events.

Power as enumerated by Foucault is everywhere and nowhere. It is actually invisible between the networks of society that watches its internalisation through representations and acceptances of a general form of life. The thesis, suggests a curb on this power which can be established through bridging the gap between the relations of power. It can never be equalled but can definitely be diminished to the extent so as to let the 'other' inhale the air without prior permission of the authorised. I completely disagree with Meenakshi Thappan, who in her book, *Living the Body: Embodiment Womanhood and Identity in Contemporary India*, considers power as being a positive or productive one. I also disagree with her when while considering the relations of power, she writes that a woman can come on her own terms and also

a physical and emotional well being and that too contributing to her self- esteem and body image through the concept of power as not oppressive (Thappan 167). It is the dis-integration of the identity through the body that we are required to deal with. Karnad's plays are an opportunity to look into and beyond the problematisation that an identity deals with. An overhauling of the norms is the need of the hour. The question is about liberty of the woman as that of a man and human beings in general. The normalising tendency of the dis-integrated identities through discipline or punishment is no answer to this question. The very idea of inequality in gender needs a normalising treatment so that corrective measures for the women do not arise at all. Docility will be done away once we do away with the concept of inequality in the heterosexual context. Resistance is foremost, in creating an awareness of one's condition. To quote from Thappan's book, " At the same time, women's socio-economic position often restrains them from open rebellion as does their socially internalised respect for family and community honour (Thappan 165). Even Thappan refutes the possibility of resistance as a tool for the liberation of women. It is not easy to break free from the shackles of the constraints that have been internalised in their very being since ages. This is where the identity is actually problematised. Thappan herself writes, "... gender domination consists in an imprisonment effected via body (Thappan 166)." Foucault avers, "... it is already the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires come to be identified and constituted as individuals." (Foucault, *Power* 98) The thesis suggests a narrowing down of the differences in the relations of power, a letting loose of the hold of power and to bring about the inequality between the genders to the minimum through a consideration of the fact of the right to liberty as a natural human right. To

speak in Foucauldian terms it is about "... opening up spaces of freedom..." (Oksala, *How* 99) Only then, the emancipation is said to have actually begun.

The further scope of research from this thesis while focussing on gender-inequality can in the form of data analysis include the status of women with respect to education, condition of women in work places according to class and status and such an analysis can focus on condition of women labourers. An inter- disciplinary research in the field of literature and law, focussing on the efficacy of the legal rights with respect to women can be worked upon. The focusing on the specific situations in Foucauldian terms may lead to tangible analysis of particular situations and a better understanding towards a social change.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Karnad, Girish. *Two Plays by Girish Karnad*. Oxford UP, 2005.
- . *Three Plays*. Oxford UP, 2007.
- , *Collected Plays Volume 2: "Girish Karnad With an Introduction by Aparna Bhargava Dharwadker,"* 2nd edition, Oxford UP, 2008.
- . *Yayati*. Oxford UP, 2008.
- . *Wedding Album*. Oxford UP, 2009.

Secondary Sources

- Adams, Rachel. "Critical Legal Thinking." *Human Sciences Research Council*, South Africa, 17 Nov.2017, pp. 126-34.
- Agarwal, Kumud. "Evolving the Man: A Note on Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* as Drama of Evolutionary Impulse in Man." *Thunder on Stage: A Study of Girish Karnad's Plays*, Book Enclave, 2008, pp.83- 89.
- Ahuja, Chaman. "Interview." *Contemporary Indian Drama: Astride Two Traditions*, edited by Urmil, Talwar, and Bandana Chakrabarty, 2005, pp. 173-82.
- Apeksha. "Girish Karnad's Feminism and the Plight of Sub- Altern." *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies (IJELR)*, vol.2, no. 1, 2015, pp. 279-85. www.ijelr.in.Accessed 19Oct. 2019.
- Babu, Sarat M. *Indian Drama Today: A Study in the Theme of Cultural Deformity*. Sangam Books,1997.

- . "Gender Deformity: Tendulkar's *Kamala*, Karnad's *Naga- Mandala* and Rakesh's *Half- Way House*." *A Study in the Cultural Deformity*. Sangam Books, 1977, pp.28- 43.
- . "Physical Deformity: Karnad's *Hayavadana*, Tendulkar's *Sakharam Binder* and Sircar's *Evam Indrajit*." *A Study in the Cultural Deformity*. Sangam Books, 1977, pp. 82- 99.
- . "Dionysian Ego in *Hayavadana*." *Indian English Drama* edited by J. Dodiya. Sangam Books, 1977, pp. 226- 30.
- . "The Concept of Chastity." *Indian English Drama*, edited by J. Dodiya, Sangam Books, 2009, pp. 237- 48.
- Bala, Suman. "This Mad Dance of Incompleteness: Search for Completeness." *Indian English Drama*. edited by J. Dodiya. Prestige, 2009, pp. 190- 98.
- Bansal, Anupam, and Satish Kumar, "Emancipating Women: A Note on Women Empowerment in Girish Karnad's *Naga Mandala*." *Thunder on Stage: A Study of Girish Karnad's Plays*, edited by C.L. Khatri, and Sudhir K. Arora, Book Enclave, 2008, pp. 158- 63.
- Bartky, Sandra Lee. *Femininity and Domination: Studies in the Phenomenology of Oppression*. Routledge, 1990.
- Beauvoir, Simone De. *The Second Sex*. 1953. translated and edited by H.M. Parshley. Introduction by Margaret Crosland. Everyman's Library, 1993.
- . Introduction. *The Second Sex*. edited by H.M. Parshley. Everyman's Library, 1993, pp. xix- xxxvi.

Bhagwat, Vidyut. *Feminist Social Thought: An Introduction to Six Key Thinkers*. 2004, Rawat Publications, 2010.

Bharata, *Introduction to Bharata's Natyashastra*, translated by Adya, Rangacharya. Munshiram Manohar Publishers, 2005.

Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford U P, 1997.

---. Introduction. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford U P, 1997, pp. 1-30

---. *Gender Trouble*. 1990, 2nd edition Routledge Classics, 2016.

---. Preface (1999). *Gender Trouble*, Routledge Classics, 2007, pp.vi- xxviii.

---. *Bodies That Matter*. 2011. Routledge Classics, 2017.

---. Introduction. *Bodies That Matter*, Routledge Classics, 2011. pp. xi-xxx.

Chakravartee, Moutushi. "Myth and Reality in *Hayavadana* and *Nagamandala*." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008, pp. 181-87.

Chanana, Ranjana. "Myth as Aesthetic Experience in Girish Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain*." *Contemporary Indian Dramatists*, edited by Shubha Tiwari Atlantic, 2007, pp. 80-94.

Chandran, Subhash S. "*Bali The Sacrifice* and Dionysian Life Assertion." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspective*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008, pp.294- 302.

- Chaitanya, Pratima. "Girish Karnad's *Yayati* and *Bali The Sacrifice*: A Study in Female Sexuality." *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, vol. 1, no. 3, Dec.2010,pp.1-13. www.the-criterion.com. Accessed 8 Aug.2018.
- Challa, Venkata Ramani. "Reflection of Modernity in Girish Karnad's *The Wedding Album*." *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL)*, vol.6, no. 4, Oct- Dec. 2018. Pp. 314-19. Accessed 27 Nov. 2019.
- Chaturvedi, Roopesh, and Rohini Dubey, "Mechanism of Girish Karnad as a Dramatist." *Contemporary Indian Dramatists: Astride Two Traditions*, edited by Urmil, Talwar, and Bandana Chakrabarty, Rawat, 2005, pp. 125-28.
- Crosland, Margaret.Introduction. *The Second Sex*. Simone De Beauvoir. edited by H.M. Parshley.Everyman's Library, 1993,pp. vii- xvii.
- Das, Sisir Kumar. *A History of Indian Literature, 1911-1956: Struggle for FreedomTriumph and Tragedy*. South Asia Books, 1995.
- Dass, Veena Noble. "Psychology of Social Development: A Study of *Naga- Mandala* and *Tale- Danda*." *Indian English Drama*, edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 275- 79.
- Daniel, Jemima. "Treatment of Myth in Girish Karnad's Play, *The Fire and the Rain*." *International Journal of Innovation, Research in Science, Engineering, Technology*, vol.2, no.1, Apr.2013, pp 1315-17. www.ijirset.com. Accessed 18 Oct.2019.
- Danaraddhi, Vijaylakhshmi. "De- colonised Women Characters in Girish Karnad's Plays." *International Journal of Language, literature and Humanities*, vol. iv, no.III, March.2016, pp. 34-40. Ijellh.com. Accessed 19Oct. 2019.

Dasaraddhi, k. "Women's Struggle with Identity and their Space of Honour." *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities (IJELLH)*, vol. 3, no. 4, Aug.2015, pp. 54- 62. www.ijellh.com. Accessed 18 Oct. 2019.

Dhanavel, P. *The Indian Imagination of Girish Karnad*. Prestige, 2009.

Dhantal, Smita. "Women Characters in the Select Plays of Girish Karnad and Vijay Tendulkar." *Journal of Higher Education and Research Society*. vol.6, no. 1, April 2018. pp. 687-94. www.researchgate.net/publication/334290534. Accessed 18 Oct. 2019.

Dharwadker, Aparna Bhargava. *Theatres of Independence: Drama, Theory and Urban Performance in India Since 1947*. 2005, OUP, 2008.

---. Introduction. *Theatres of Independence: Drama, Theory and Urban Performance in India since 1947*, OUP, 2008, pp. xv- xviii.

---. "Girish Karnad, Icon Who Transformed Modern Indian Theatre". *The Wire*, 10 June. 2019, [thewire.in> the – arts> the –girish- karnad-i-knew-a-tribute-to-an- icon](http://thewire.in/the-arts/the-girish-karnad-i-knew-a-tribute-to-an-icon). Accessed 7 July, 2020.

Dodiya, Jaydipsinh, editor. *Indian English Drama*, Prestige, 2009.

Donawad, KempannaRachappa. "A Feminist Study of Girish Karnad's Nagamanadala." *International Journal of Advanced Research (IJAR)*, Dec. 2016. pp. 927-29. doi:0.21474/IJAROI/2474. Accessed 19 Oct.2019.

Dreyfus, Hubert L, and Paul, Rabinow. *Michel Foucault: Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. U of Chicago Press, 1983, pp.51-57. PDF File.

Dwivedi, A. N. *Studies in Contemporary Indian English Drama: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Kalyani Publishers, 1999.

During, Simon. *Foucault and Literature: Towards a Genealogy of Writing* London. Routledge, 1992.

Fadyl, J.K. and Nicholls, D.A. & Mcpherson, K.M. "Interrogating Discourse to Specific Enquiry." *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine*, vol.17, no. 5, pp. 491- 507, Doi:10.1177/1363459312 464073. Accessed 6 Aug.2019.

Farrell, Clare O'. *Michel Foucault*. Sage Publishers, 2005.

Foucault, Michel. *Language, Counter- Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*. edited by Donald F. Bouchard. Cornell U P, 1980.

---. *Power/ Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977*. edited by Colin Gordon and translated by Colin Gordon.et.al. Vintage Books, 1980.

---. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. 1977, translated by Alan. Sheridan. Penguin Books, 1991.

---. *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*. 1986, edited by Paul Rabinow.1984. Penguin Books, 1991.

---. *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality: 2*.translated by. Robert Hurley. 1985.Penguin Books,1992.

---. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. 1970, Vintage Books, 1994.

- . *Ethics Subjectivity and Truth: The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*.vol.1.edited by Paul Rabinow.translated by Robert Hurley and Others. The New Press.1994.pp. 51-57. PDF File.
- . *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: 1* translated by Robert Hurley. Vintage, 1998.
- . *The Essential Foucault: Selections from the Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*. edited by Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose. Rev. edition., The New Press, 2003.
- .Introduction by Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, *The Essential Foucault: Selections from The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*.edited by Paul Rabinow, and Nikolas Rose. The New Press, 2003, pp. vii- xxxv.
- . “The Subject and Power.” *The Essential Foucault: Selections from the Essential Works of Foucault, 1954- 1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow and Nikolas S. Rose. The New Press, 2003, pp.126- 44.
- . “The Technologies of the Self.” *The Essential Foucault: Selections from the Essential Works of Foucault, 1954- 1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose. The New Press, 2003, pp. 145-169.
- . *The Archaeology of Knowledge: And The Discourse on Language*, 1972, translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith. Vintage Books January 2010.
- Garity, Joe. “Discourse Analysis: Foucault and Social Work Research Identifying some Methodological Complexities.” *Journal of Social Work*, vol.10, no. 2, Sage, 12 Apr ,2010, pp. 195-210. doi.org/10.1177/1468017310363641. Accessed 4 Aug.2019.

Ghanshyam, G.A. "A Web of Socio- Psycho and Cultural Aspects in the Plays of Girish

Karnad." *Indian Drama in English: Some Perspectives*, edited by Abha Shukla Kaushik, Kindle, Atlantic, 2013. pp. 715-846.

Goel, Savita. "Folk Theatre Strategies in *Hayavadana*." *Indian English Drama*, edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 204- 12.

Gupta, Pallavi. "Split in Identity in *Hayavadana*." *International Journal of Research*, vol.3, no. 11, pp. 1068- 88. edupediapublications.org/journals. Accessed 25 Aug. 2018.

Gupta, Santosh. "A Story of Love and Marriage." *Indian English Drama*, edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 249- 56.

Gutting, Gary. *Foucault: A Very Short Introduction*. 2005, 2nd edition, OUP. 2019.

Harstock, Nancy. "Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women?" *Feminism/Postmodernism*, edited and with an Introduction by Linda J. Nicholson. Routledge. New York. 21 Oct. 1989, pp. 157-75.

Hazarika, Munmi. "Feminine Sensibility in Girish Karnad's Plays." *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL)*, vol. 5, no. 1, Jan- Mar. 2017, pp. 11-15. www.rjelal.com. Accessed 19 Oct 2019.

Indira, B. "The Edible Women and Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana*." *Indian English Drama*. edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 16-73.

Jalote, S.R. "Epic Theatre Revisited: A Study of *Naga-Mandala*." *Indian English Drama*, edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 263- 74.

Jayalakshmi, P. "Politics of Power: A Study of Gender and Caste in *the Fire and the Rain*." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performane and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee Pencraft International, 2008, pp.250- 71.

Jha, Gauri Shankar. "Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* and Post- colonial Fruition." *Thunder on Stage: A Study o fGirish Karnad's Plays*, edited by J.Dodiya, Book Enclave, 2008, pp. 68- 75.

Jose, George. "*Nagamandala* as a Folk/Fake Morality Play: A Study of the Folk Paradigm in Karnad's Play in the Light of the Naga Cult of Kerala." *Girish Karnad'sPlays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008. pp.208- 15.

Joshi, Pranav. "*Naga- Mandala* Reconsidered." *Indian English Drama*, edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 257- 62.

Kapoor, Jaya. "Use of Mask by Girish Karnad in *Hayavadana* and O' Neill's *Memorandaon Masks*." Relevance in the Contemporary Context." *Perspectives and Challenges in India*, Atlantic, 2007, pp. 67-73.

Kaushik, Abha Shukla. editor. *Indian Drama in English: Some Perpspectives*, Kindle ed., Atlantic Publishers & Distributors,2013.

Kavithanjali, N.Padmapriyadharshini. "Projection of Female Characters by Girish Karnad's with Reference to His Plays *Hayavadana* and *Nagamandala*" *IJIRT*, vol.6, no. 2, July.2019.pp.111-113.www.ijirt.org>Article.Accessed 7 July.2020.

- Khanna, Anshuman. "Dialogic Ramifications in Karnad's *Bali The Sacrifice*." *Thunder on Stage: A Study of Girish Karnad's Plays*, edited by C.L. Khatri, and Sudhir K. Arora, Book Enclave, 2008, pp. 105-16.
- Khatri, C.L, and Sudhir K.Arora, editors. *Thunder on Stage: A Study of Girish Karnad's Plays*. Book Enclave, 2008.
- Khatri, C.L. "Script of Submission and Subversion: A Critique of Girish Karnad's Women." "Creation and Criticism. Apr.2016, nd. Creationandcriticism.com. Accessed 16 Aug.2019.
- Kumar, Geeta. "The Play of Power- Politics: A Study of *Tuglaq*, *Hayavadana* and *Tale- Danda*." *The Plays of Girish Karnad*, edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 92- 103.
- Kumawat, Deepa and Iris. Ramnani. "Impact of Brechtian Theory on Girish Karnad: An Analysis of *Hayavadana* and *Yayati*." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (IOSR-JHSS)*, vol. 16, no. 5, Sep- Oct. 2013. pp. 72-75. www.iosrjournals.org. Accessed 25 Aug.2018.
- Madhuri, Naga J. "Myth and Mythology in Girish Karnad's Contemporary Plays." *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL)*, vol.1, no. 3, 2013, pp.241-44. www.rjelal.com. Accessed 25 Aug. 2018.
- McNay, Lois. *Gender and Agency:Reconfiguring the Subject in Feminist and Social Theory*. Polity Press, 2000.
- Mee, Erin B. "*Hayavadana* Model of Complexity." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008, pp. 145- 65.

Manjali, Franson. *Language, Discourse and Culture: Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives*. Anthem Press, 2008.

Millett, Kate. *Sexual Politics*. Introduction by Catherine A. Mackinnon. Afterword by Rebecca Mead. Columbia UP, 2016.

Mishra, Saurabh. "Magnum Opus of Man Woman Relationships in the Background of Indian Sensibility in Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana*, *Naga-Mandala*, *Tuglaq*, *Yayati*, *The Fire and The Rain* and *Tale- Danda*." *Indian Drama in English: Some Perspectives*, edited by Abha Shukla Kaushik, Kindle, Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 2013, pp. 2371-2732.

Mishra, Shubha. "Reading and Mis (reading): Girish Karnad's *Bali The Sacrifice* in the Light of Michel Foucault's Panopticism." *Thunder on Stage: A Study of Girish Karnad's Plays* edited by C.L. Khatri and Sudhir K.Arora, Book Enclave, 2008, pp. 127-57.

Mohan, Anupama. "Girish Karnad's *Nagamandala*: Problematizing Feminism." *Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, no 22, Oct. 2009, intersections.anu.edu.au/issue22/mohan.htm. Accessed 19 Oct.2019.

Mukherjee, Tutan, editor. *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*. Pencraft International, 2008.

Muduli, Swastika. "Gender Bias Versus Power of Sexuality: A Study of Girish Karnad's *Nagamandala*." *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities*, vol.2, No.9, Jan. 2015. pp. 331-42. www.ijellh.com. Accessed 25 Aug. 2018.

Nand, Kumar. *Indian English Drama: A Study in Myths*. 1st edition., Sarup & Sons, 2011. pp. 114-80.

Naik, M.K. "From the Horse's Mouth: A Study of *Hayavadana*." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008, pp.135-44.

Naikar, Basavaraj, editor. *Indian English Literature*. Atlantic Publishers, 2007. pp. 175-83.

Nayar, Pramod k. *Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory: From Structuralism to Ecocriticism*. Pearson, 2010.

Oksala, Johanna. *How to Read Foucault*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2008.

Oliver, Paul. *Foucault: The Key Ideas*. CPI Group Ltd., 2010.

Panday, Shweta, Gulshan, Das. "Plays of Girish Karnad as a Social Document". *International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature*. vol.6, no.2, Feb.2018. pp.141-144. www.papers.ssrn.com. Accessed 7 July, 2020.

Paranjape, Makarand R. "Metamorphosis as Metaphor: Shape Shifting in Karnad's Plays." *Indian English Drama*, edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 82-91.

Parshley, H.M. Introduction. *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir, 1953, Everyman's Library, 1990, pp. xix- xxxvi.

Pavani, S. "Voice of Woman on Irrational Religious Acts: An Observation on Girish Karnad's Play *Bali The Sacrifice*." *International Journal of Advanced Research and Development*, vol. 2, no. 11, 2017, pp. 39-44. www.ijarnd.com. Accessed 18 Oct. 2019.

- Prasad, Gogugunuri. "Girish Karnad as a Myth Intoxicated Modern Playwright." *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL)*, vol.2, no. 2, 2014, pp. 238-43. www.rjelel.com. Accessed 25 Aug.2018.
- Pickett, Bren. "Foucault and the Politics of Resistance." *Polity*, vol.28, no. 4, (summer) 1996, pp.455-66. Accessed 22 Dec.2019.
- R. J. Kalpana. *Feminism and Family: Feminist Issues in Indian Literature*, Prestige, 2005.
- Rajeswaran, Sridhar." Girish Karnad: Tying Beginning to Ends." *Contemporary Indian Drama: Astride Two Traditions*, edited by Urmil, Talwar and Bandana Chakrabarty, Rawat, 2005, pp.128- 43.
- Raju, Yadava B. "Race and Gender in Yayati." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008, pp. 80- 87.
- Renganathan, Mala. "Woman as Director: Re- Reading *The Fire and The Rain*." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008, pp. 264- 71.
- Rowbotham, Sheila. *Women, Resistance and Revolution: A History of Women and Revolution In the Modern World*. Verso, 2014.
- Roy, Sumita. "Negotiating Ideological Spaces: Reading *Bali The Sacrifice*." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008, pp. 282-93.

- Saini, Alpana. "Girish Karnad's *Wedding Album*: The Mythical Discourse of Culture." *Literary Voice, ABI- Annual Peer Reviewed Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, Apr.2012, pp.42-46. www.literaryvoice.in>img. Accessed 29Jan.2020.
- Sankaranarayan, Smitha. "Power Structures in Karnad's Plays *Nagamandala*." *Language in India*, vol. 15, no.11, Nov.2015, pp. 166-73. www.languageinindia.com. Accessed 26 Jan.2020.
- Sarangi, Jayadeep. "Myth, History and Tradition: A Study of Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* and *Tuglaq*." *Contemporary Indian Dramatists*, edited by Shubha Tiwari, Atlantic, 2007, pp. 70- 79.
- Sarup, Madan. *An Introductory Guide to PostStructuralism and Postmodernism*. 2nd edition., The University of Georgia Press, 1993.
- Saxena, Alka. "The Symbol of Agni in Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain*." *Perspectives and Challenges in India*, edited by Neeru Tandon, Atlantic, 2006, pp. 42-50.
- Saxena, Madhubala. "Portraying the Inner Landscape: A Peep into the Characters of Girish Karnad's *Bali The Sacrifice*." *Thunder on Stage: A Study of Girish karnad's Plays*, edited by C.L. Khatri, and Sudhir K. Arora. Book Enclave, 2008, pp. 117-26.
- Shastri, Sudha, and Amit Kumar. "Locating Bhaktinian Carnival in Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana* and *Nagamandala*." *Contemporary Indian Drama: Astride Two Traditions*, edited by Urmil, Talwar, and Bandana Chakrabarty, Rawat, 2005, pp. 144- 56.

- Shobha, Diwakar. "Flowering Tributary of Indian English Drama Girish Karnad: A Study of *Naga- Mandala*." *Indian Drama in English: Some Perspectives*, edited by Abha, Shukla Kaushik, Kindle, Atlantic, 2013, pp. 258-482.
- Singh, Krishna. "Genesis of Titles and Evolution of Themes in the Plays of Girish Karnad." *Indian Drama in English: Some Perspectives*, edited by Abha Shukla Kaushik, Kindle, Atlantic, 2013, pp. 3019-3398.
- Singh, Krishna. "Postcolonial Subalterization in the Plays of Girish Karnad." *The Criterion: An International Journal of English*, vol.2, no.1, 2011, pp. 1-12. Accessed 3 Sep 2019.
- Sinh, Ranbir. "The Bold and the Meek." *Contemporary Indian Drama: Astride Two Traditions*, edited by Urmil, Talwar and Bandana, Chakrabarty, Rawat, 2005, pp. 61-79.
- Sreekumar, Sharmila, and K.C. Bindu. "Performing Woman, Performing Body: Adapting *Nagamadala* for Feminist Theatre." *Girish Karnad's Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, edited by Tutun Mukherjee, Pencraft International, 2008, pp. 216-21.
- Suneel, Seema. "Karnad's *Yayati* Reconsidered." *Indian English Drama*, edited by J. Dodiya, Prestige, 2009, pp. 104-13.
- Syed, Shahewar and Aparna, Tiwari. "The Traditional and the Contemporary: A Study of Technique in Girish Karnad's *Naga- Mandala*." *Indian Drama in English: Some Perspectives*, edited by Abha Shukla Kaushik, Kindle, Atlantics, 2013, pp. 5786-5932.

- Talwar, Urmil, and Bandana Chakrabartky, edited. *Contemporary Indian Drama: astride two traditions*. Rawat Publications, 2005.
- Tandon, Neeru. *Perspective and Challenges in Indian –English Drama*. Atlantic Publishers, 2006.
- Thapan, Meenakshi. *Living the Body: Embodiment, Womanhood and Identity*. Sage, 2009.
- Tiwari, Shubha, editor. *Contemporary Indian Dramatists*. Atlantic Publishers, 2007.
- Tiwari, Shweta. “Mythology and Identity: A Study of Karnad’s Hayavadana”. vol.4, no.18, Aug.2015pp. 92-93. Accessed 7 July, 2020.
- Vanitha, A. “The Third Eye of Vision in Girish Karnad’s *Hayavadana*.” *Thunder on Stage: A Study of Girish Karnad’s Plays*, Book Enclave, 2008, pp. 72- 82.
- Vatsyayan, Kapila. *Traditional Indian Theatre: Multiple Streams*.1980, Rev. edition., National Book Trust, 2016.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. edited with an Introduction by Miriam Brody,1992, Rev. edition., Penguin Books,2004.
- Young, Robert. “Order of Discourse.” *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. 1981. pp. 52-64.