

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, GUWAHATI

NPTEL

**NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSES
AN INITIATIVE OF MHRD**

INTRODUCTION TO MODERN INDIAN DRAMA

BY

**DR. KIRAN KESHAVAMURTHY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
IIT GUWAHATI**

Good morning, welcome to the next session of the introduction to Modern Indian Theatre. For today we will actually be discussing another very important playwright, Girish Karnad, 1938, and he turns 80 this year, so he is another very important playwright, he also direct the few plays, of his own plays and he is also very important because like many of his other contemporaries including Badal Sarkar from Bengali, Ebrahim Alkazi and so on and so forth, B. V. Karanth, Alok Padam Singh, so he belong to the first generation of playwrights post-independence, and many of his plays as himself puts it, had to do with the return to the cultural roots of theatre, they had to engaged with this very complex negotiation between colonial forms of theatre and indigenous folk traditions.

So in many of his plays Girish Karnad is trying to grapple with this dilemma that many playwrights of his generation had which was that what we do with the colonial legacy of theatre, and to what extent can there be a conversation between colonial forms of theatre and indigenous theatre traditions.

So as a playwright, as a dramatist, he drew a lot from local folk traditions, folk forms like the Tamasha, the Nautanki as well as the Yakshagana tradition of performance which was prevalent in the border regions of Maharashtra and Karnataka. He was himself born in Matheran, Bombay in 1938, which was then part of the Bombay presidency, but even though he studied Marathi in school it was orally Kannada of that was his mutual language of expression.

Some of his plays especially the ones on The Dream of Tipu Sultan were written in English, but most of his plays were written in Kannada and then translated by him and others into English, so he is important in some sense as one of those early figures, playwrights, who belong to the theatre of roots movement, he may not entirely identify with a movement himself, but there are elements in his plays that suggest that he wish to draw from or incorporate certain elements of folk tradition or folk forms in his own theatre to very often introduce multiple frameworks of theatre, multiple narrative frameworks, and also in order to parody, ironize, certain ideals like motherhood, like justicity, like fidelity, you know like, you know all these issues were in some sense parody denial, ionized in his place.

So for instance if you look at his play on Tughlaq, right, which was written and published in 1964, again he draws on the idealist 14th century Sultan of Delhi, Muhammad bin Tughlaq, right, and that in some sense is also given a modernist twist, so it's interested to see how he draws from older historical figures and recast them in a modernist EDM to talk about the idealism and disillusionment of the Nehruvian era post-independence.

Then there was this other very important play that we'll be discussing today which is Hayavadana, 1971, which is again based on a theme drawn from The Transposed Heads, right, which was initially of course a tale from the Kathasaritsagar, but was also then adapted into a novella by the German writer Thomas Mann which was called The Transposed Heads in 1940, so it was a true originally from the 11th century Sanskrit text Kathasaritsagara, and he also employed the folk theatre form of Yakshagana in the Hayavadana play.

Then he also had another play called Naga-Mandala in 1988, which was based on a folk tale that was recounted to him by the writer and translator A. K. Ramanujam, who in some sense brought him the Karnataka Sahitya Academy Award for the most creative work of 1989, it was directed by J. Garland Wright, as part of the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the Guthrie theatre in Minneapolis, then the theatre that was subsequently commissioned to him was Agni Mattu Male or The Fire and the Rain, right, and before that came Taledanda or Death by Beheading in 1990 which again uses Veerashaivism and Basavanna, the great Veerashaiva anti caused veerashaiva leader and poet who formed, was a part of the radical protest and reform movement in 12th century Karnataka against the caste system.

He has won several awards including the Sangeet Natak Akademi award in 1972, the Padma Shri in 1974, the Padma Bhushan in 1992, the Kannada Sahitya Parishat in 1992, the Sahitya Academy in 1994, the Jnanpith in 1998, the Kalidas Samman in 1998 and so on, right, so he is also being part of many you know, acted in many movies and films in Kannada and Hindi, and he has also written certain very important screen plays for films like Bhumika by Shyam Benegal and Satyadev Dubey, and he is also written scripts for certain important non-feature films in Kannada.

So now let us actually move to our discussion of Girish Karnad's very important play Yakshagana, which was imagined to be one of those paradigmatic plays which incorporated folk elements into urban theatre.

Now it's interested to look at Hayavadana in terms of its structure and form in the ways in which it deploys certain motives like the Lord Ganesha in the initial phase of play, and the initial movements of the play, it's also framed by the female chorus, you also have two anonymous actors, you have the Bhagavata who performs the role of the Sutradhar in Girish Karnad's play Hayavadana, and you also have the central story of Padmini and here love for two men, Devadatta and his friend Kapila.

When you look at, when you read, and if you have seen the performance of Hayavadana which is first performed in 1973, 1971 sorry, it appears as a, it is rather traditional play that begins with an invocation to the Lord Ganesha.

Now the story itself has to do with the love that women has for two men, right, and in the Kathasaritsagara the 11 century tale, there are slight differences between the tale Thomas Mann's novel stick adaptation of the tale and Girish Karnad's play Hayavadana.

In the Kathasaritsagara, in the story that's called the heads that got switched it contains a very simply riddle, a women is travelling with her husband and her brother when she discovers the men's decapitated bodies in the temple of Parvati, and she receives a boon from the goddess which will bring them back to life, but in the process of bringing them back to life she switches the heads by mistake, so that is all thing problem of true identity ends up having and unambiguous solution to this, in this version, the one with the husband's head is the husband because the head rules the body and the person, so the person identity depends on the head in, and this of course draws from certain mythic genealogies of caste which can be found in Manodharma-samgita and the Rigveda where the Brahmins are set to have reason out of the Purusha's head, right, man's head while the Shudras erodes from his feet.

So the supremacy of the head over the body is established in the Kathasaritsagara in the tale called the heads that got switched.

In Thomas Mann's elaboration of the story in his novella, The Transposed Heads in 1940, again there is the three characters the female protagonist Sita ironically name Sita is married to Shridaman who is a very intelligent intellectual static and sensitive man, but she also feels an intense physical attraction for Nanda who is Shridaman's friend who is an emotionally cruel and strong man with a very find physic.

In the Thomas Mann version the husband, right, Shridaman beheads himself in Parvati's temple out of jealousy and despaired because he realizes that his wife is actually deeply in love with his friend, and the friend out of guilt and fear again beheads himself when he discovers his friends decapitated body, and the pregnant wife Sita who is pregnant prepares to die in order to avoid ignominy dishonor for herself and for the child.

After the accident of the transposition of the heads a holy aesthetic grant Sita, the new Shridaman by using the same logic that appears in the folk tale, but in Mann's text the supremacy of the head is sustained and challenged beyond the point of crisis, so the new bodies of the two men are change inexorably until they are compatible with their heads once again, right, so the bodies of the two friends also change until they compatible with the heads, so Shridaman who is intellectual aesthetic his head lies on Kapila's body, right, sorry on in this case on Nanda's body, and Nanda's body soon losses it's athleticism it's physic and becomes soft, while the reverse happens with Nanda's head which is on Shridaman's delicate body which acquires musculature overtime.

So the new bodies of the two men they change irreversibly until they are compatible with the heads once again, but the original bodies also exhort their own subversive power and change the heads indefinably, so Sita to whom the man with the husband head and friend body has given the full enjoyment of the pleasures, of central pleasure for a time find itself yawning once again for the friend who has Nanda's head and Shridaman's body, and eventually by the end of the Novella Shridaman and Nanda kill each other in the forest and Sita commits sati on the

funeral pyre leaving her 4 year old son behind to keep alive the memory of the strange sacrifice, right, so this is what happens in Thomas Mann's adaptation of the heads that got switched of folk tale from the Kathasaritsagara.

In Karnad's play you have certain additional elements, certain additional frames to the play which also de-orientalizes a Thomas Mann's version of the heads that got switched, because in the heads that got switched, in the Transposed Heads there is a certain fascination with sati as an oriental practice that testifies to the wife's fidelity to her husband, so she punishes herself for actually betraying her desire for another man, her husband's friend.

In the Karnad play on Hayavadana there is this additional element where you have the Bhagavata who was the narrator, he is the sutradhar of the play, he resonates with some of the folk sutradhar of folk plays whose role is to very often step in intervene of the action engaged in a question and answer session with the characters who appear on stage, right, and in the production of Girish Karnad's Hayavadana mask were also used as you know which was actually drawn from certain folk traditions of theatre Yakshagana and others where masks were used, so you have for example Hayavadana himself, the main character the eponymous character of the play Hayavadana who is a horse headed man, right, so he has the body of human being, but he has the head of a horse thing, and he interrupts the story of the women who fell in love with two men, right and in this case the names are Padmini and her husband is called Devadatta and his friend is called Kapila, so you have Kapila, you have Devadatta and you have Padmini.

And the main story, the main plot of Padmini's love for these two men is interrupted early in the play by Hayavadana and his own story, his own past, and you also have an anonymous actor, you also have a female chorus that constantly anticipates the action of the play and very often common sort it in a tragic fashion, and you also have the use of 3 dolls in the actual production, the first production of the play in 1973, and when the play was remounted in 1989 small children played the role of these dolls, and these dolls also wore masked and the purpose of these dolls was to actually externalize the illicit desires and thoughts of Padmini actually sleeping when she begins to fantasize about Kapila after the transposition, alright, so you have all these additional folk elements that adds to the complexity, the layered complexity of the play.

So in the Hayavadana the play itself was performed initially in 1971 as a poster play for the emerging roots movement, it was seen to be a new dramatic form which successfully incorporated folk elements into modern urban theatre, in an urban setting, in the 1972 production by B. V. Karanth there was the use of certain traditional performance elements from Yakshagana which is a well-known jandra of dance drama performed in Karnataka, and there was a very interesting hybrid quality to the play which made it neither Indian nor exclusively Western right, in some sense Karnad wasn't interested in trying to get rid of Western elements of theatre, but was also trying to incorporate certain folk elements to produce a play which could not be reduced to either of at these two categories of Western and Indian.

In Hayavadana the play focuses again on Padmini who is attracted to Kapila, who is her very intellectual husband Devadatta's friend, right, and Kapila has an athletic physic and he's also

the son of a blacksmith, Padmini herself is the daughter of a merchant and Devadatta is a Brahmin, so there is already a prohibition on the possibility of Padmini marrying Kapila because that would count as an inter-caste marriage, right, so it's already forbidden and so she marries Devadatta who is a Brahmin, and Devadatta who grows jealous of, who discovers his wife's desire for Kapila grows jealous and cuts off his own head in front of the Kali temple, in fact he even offers to, he promises to offer his head to Kali if at all he should acquire Padmini as his wife, Kapila later on finds his body and he knows that he might be blamed for Devadatta's suicide because of his own desire for Padmini and he ends up beheading himself too.

And Padmini who is again terrified of the gossip that will ensue because she is worried that the world might think that the two men fought over a woman who was of a sexually disreputable character ends up on the verge of killing herself, you know stabbing herself to death, but that is when the goddess Kali intervenes and stops her from killing herself, right, and Padmini begs for the life of the two men and she ends up switching the heads of the two men in her eagerness to bring them back to life and so you have, she ends up with Devadatta's husband's body being transposed with Kapila's head, while Kapila's body acquires Devadatta's head, and she of course the choice is easy to make initially at least that she ends up leaving with Devadatta's head and Kapila's body, right, so she ends up with that hybrid combination of Devadatta's head with Kapila's body, while Kapila's head with Devadatta's body ends up being rejected.

And like in the Thomas Mann's adaptation of *The Transposed Heads*, Padmini later on as time passes she realizes that her husband's body is growing softer, it's lost its athleticism because clearly his, the head governs the body, right, so he loses his athleticism and he is no longer attractive to his wife, and she begins fantasizing about Kapila whose body is also undergone a muscular transformation, who's become the athletic the way he used to be, and there is also the predicament of the child because when Padmini is pregnant with her son, the question of paternity becomes a riddle which cannot be answered, so is it Devadatta's body that produced the child or did Devadatta's mind produce the child, right, so it's not clear, right.

And but the difference lies here that while Thomas Mann's *Novella* right, is a philosophical prediction of the heads that got switched, Hayavadana places this debate, this dichotomy between mind and body as a dichotomy between self and other, right, so while in Thomas Mann there is a battle rages between, I mean loss between the head-re-intellect and the body and its emotions in the *Hayavadana*, the dichotomy between the opposition between mind and body is couched as a dichotomy between self and other which is placed within the social and political context of post-independence India.

So the Bhagavata who was the Sutradhar of the play, the narrator was a singer and he is about to introduce Padmini's story, he is interrupted by an actor who runs on stage yelling that he has just seen a talking horse, right, and no one believes it, they are incredulous and they wonder how a horse can talk. The shocked actor swears that he saw a horse talking to him which is when Hayavadana appears on stage and he has, he is wearing the horse's head or a horse's mask and the man's body, and they still don't believe that he is a hybrid grass between a horse and a man, and they try to remove the, what they think is a mask and they are unable to, and they realize the mask is the actual real face.

So his story Hayavadana story offers another perspective on the divide itself, right, which frames a central plot of the play by appearing both at the beginning and at the end of the play, Hayavadana is trying to unite his body and his head and this dilemma between the body and the head is expressed in terms of nationalism and indianization which is why Hayavadana says initially I took an interest in the social life of the mission, civics, politics, patriotism, nationalism, indianization and the socialist pattern of society, but that's what he tells the Bhagavata, but where is my society? Where? You must help me become a complete man, so by the end of the play Hayavadana is desperate to become a complete person, right, and of course he then chooses to transform himself entirely into a horse, but he is unable to actually lose his voice, so even though he is almost able to transform himself into horse, he's unable to use lose his voice, and his voice by the end of the play also silenced and stay for it, all he can do by the end of the play is to recite the national anthem, and this again becomes a remark on the politics of nationalism, the exclusion of re-politics of nationalism.

And the deep sense of disillusionment that the youth feel, the ones idealistic youth of pre-independence India feel post-independence, so the entire romanticism of the freedom movement is lost, once independence is won and once reality strikes, so the Hayavadana himself the child of a princess and a celestial being who takes the form of a horse who then after 15 years of marriage is miraculously transform back into this celestial form, so he is the product of miscegenation of this gross species breeding between a princess and a horse, and he comes from two worlds, two different worlds human and animal, but he feels that he belongs to neither of these two worlds, so he again represents the divide itself of the postcolonial subject, a character who is attempting to try and decolonize his own mind, so he tries to invent himself as a fully Indian subject by participating in the most simple demonstration of patriotism which is to appear at the end of act to where he manages to become a full horse but still has a human voice which he is trying to lose by his singing patriotic songs like Vande Mataram or Sare Jahan Se Acha or Jana Gana Mana, so Hayavadana is a very comic figure, right, and he is a foil to the more tragic Devadatta and Kapila who is inability to deal with their own head, body, divide leads to their deaths.

Another interesting frame element, folk element in the play is also the Ganesha, so even though the play is initially an invocation to the God Ganesha, he just appears as he would during these invocatory pooja's right, so there is the audience gets a darshan of Ganesha initially in the play, but it's not clear whether Ganesha is really a God, does he play a God on stage, right, is the audience supposed led to believe that he is a God on stage or is he nearly just an idol, just a figure, right, which invokes you know divinity, but he's not really a part of any ritual process, right, so he is not like as though pooja is being performed before Ganesha even if he is being invoked in order to bless the performance of the play, and it's interesting that Girish Karnad should have introduced Ganesha in the play because Ganesha himself is a hybrid product.

If you remember how Ganesha is formed, he's formed when from sandalwood paste that Parvati's smears on a body, right, and she moulds the paste in the form of a young boy who then becomes her son, and he is given the responsibility of guarding the entrance to her quarters and she is having a bath, and when Lord Shiva appears to meet his wife, his Ganesha refuses to let him enter, right, I mean on the strict orders of his mother, but Shiva is enriched wondering who

this impertinent boy is to interrupt, to come in between him and his concert, and he ends up beheading Ganesha much to the rage of his mother and finally Shiva has no choice but to place the head of the first living being that his followers encounter in their process of trying to find a new head for Ganesha, and of course they found an elephant they beheaded the elephant and they placed the elephant's head on Ganesha, and it's interesting that Ganesha is also being worshipped today as a hybrid product, not as a human being but as a hybrid product something someone who rises above his physical identity as human being or as an elephant, so he's been acknowledged as a hybrid, so the initial invocations of to Ganesha in the play Hayavadana suggest that the irony of Ganesha, that in some sense Ganesha I mean he's believed to be on one hand the God of completion of perfection, he is an auspicious God who is removal of obstacles to any new task that has to be accomplished and yet he is himself imperfect, he has one broken task and he sits in the mouse, and he is decorated with the snake, right.

And so the Bhagavata who is commenting on the placing of Ganesha at the beginning of the play is not able to understand how is it that someone who looks incomplete can be the God of completion, of perfection, and he tries to rationalize that by saying that perhaps it's the limitation of human knowledge itself that doesn't allow us to understand the mystery, the power of divinity of Ganesha, so in the beginning of the play Hayavadana recons story own past as the product of a princess and a celestial being who takes the form of a horse, and then ultimately when the princess is married to the white stallion she lives with him for 15 years and it's only after that the celestial being assumes, reassumes its original form, and after he's released from his cause the Hayavadana's father asks his mother to accompany him to his heaven board, but she refuses and she offers to come to the heaven with him only if she is blessed to become a horse, if he becomes a horse again, right, because she is in love with the horse and not with the man, right. And so he curses her to turn in to a horse, so the princess herself turns into a horse and she escapes, she runs away, because the child is only left behind.

And in rather humorous conversation with Bhagavata, a Hayavadana again Girish Karnad is also trying to poke fun at the poetize of nationalism but also of religion and Hinduism because Hayavadana tries to seek redemption from various holi, Hindu holi places like Banaras, Rameshwaram, Gokarna, Haridwar, Gaya, Kedarnath and so on, and is not able to find many kind of redemption, purification from these different places, because he is unable to actually transform himself completely into human being or a horse, right, so he is condemned to remain in that hybrid state as half horse and as half man.

Then the play recons story of Padmini and her love for the two men, and how in her love for the two men she accidentally ends up transposing the heads of Kapila and Devadatta, right, so unlike many of the urban realistic place that we see in you know 31:46 or others, here Tendulkar for example, here because Karnad employs many folk elements, there is the possibility of making fun of a parading certain poetize certain social and sexual norms like motherhood and female justicity, right, so the supposedly accidental transposing of the heads of the two men would suggest that Padmini the woman here desires both, right, so it's her desire for the two men is also left rather clear and ambiguous, it's betrayed, it's suggested in a later in the second act wherein the two, went to three tall ends up externalizing Padmini's own sexual fantasies and thoughts and her longing for Kapila.

The female chorus also anticipates illicit desire that Padmini has for Kapila, so the female chorus sings why should love stick to the sap of a single body, when the stem is drunk with a thick yawning of the many petaled, many flower lantana, why should we be tired down to the relation of a single flower, and later on the female chorus again sings a head for each breast, a pupil for each eye, a side for each arm, I have neither regret nor shamed, the blood pose into the earth and a song branches out in the sky, again anticipating Padmini's illicit desire for Kapila, and the dilemma that she faces as a married woman who desires another man.

So later on in the play when Devadatta recons his encounter with his gorgeous women called Padmini, he's unable to describe his beauty except in very conventional metaphors drawn from Sanskrit grotik literature and poetry often compares her to a lotus, of course the Karnad is actually trying to make fun of this the conventions of Sanskrit poetry when Kapila echoes and repeats and you know anticipates Devadatta's similes and metaphors to describe a Padmini's beauty, so for example he says Devadatta is known to be a poet, to be an aesthetic but then clearly it's his poetry is not authentic or original, he seems to be imitating earlier classical report.

How can I describe her? Devadatta says to Kapila, how fool ox rival the beast, her face is, and this is all very familiar to Kapila and he joins with great enjoyment, they both repeat together is a white lotus, her beauty is as the magic lake, her arms the lotus creepers, her breast a golden arms, and her waist and so on and so forth.

Devadatta is desperate to identify and find Padmini and ask for her hand, but he doesn't know how to do it, he doesn't know how to identify it, he doesn't have the courage to find out, so he actually sends Kapila to find her, and Kapila is more than willing to do anything for Devadatta out of his own loyalty and love for Devadatta, so when Kapila identifies Padmini's house on a street called Pavanavidi the street of merchants, right, he finds a double headed bird on the door of Padmini's house, and he's not able to identify what bird it is, no matter how much he peers at it, he doesn't know whether it's an eagle, or a lotus, or a lion, or a tiger, or a wheel, he's completely perplexed by the shape and form of the norm on the door, Padmini enters and what induce is rather funny conversation that resonates with certain Nautanki traditions where the women in Nautanki play is out with it, but here it's slightly different because you have a similar fast exchange between Kapila and Padmini, but here Padmini proves to be a very witty human unlike her rather unoriginal and husband Devadatta.

So when Kapila first sees Padmini he falls in love with her beauty and he says I give up Devadatta, this is he's talking to himself, I surrender to judgment, I hadn't thought anyone could be more beautiful than the winch Ragini who acts Rambha in our village troop, but this one you're right, she is Yakshini, Shakuntala, Urvashi, Indumathi, all rolled into one, Padmini says you not, didn't you? Kapila, yes, Padmini then why you keeping at me, what do you want? Kapila, I just want to know whose house this was. Padmini, whose house do you want? Kapila, this one, Padmini, I see, then who do you want here? Kapila, the master, Padmini, do you know his name? Kapila, no, Padmini, have you met him? Kapila, no, Padmini, have you seen him? Kapila, no, and it is interesting reversal of what actually happens the Nautanki where it's the women who was constantly saying no to a man who is not a husband, who is trying to make amorous over choice to her, and he's trying to make love to her, and ends up saying no when

she actually means yes, or ends up saying yes when she actually ends up, when she actually means no, but so here she says reversal when to Padmini's questions Kapila all constantly says no no, until he actually means yes.

Padmini, so you haven't met him? Seen him or known him, what do you want with him? Kapila, a side to himself she is quite right, what have I do with him? I only want to find out his name? Padmini, are you sure you want this house or were you? Kapila, no I'm sure this is the one. Padmini, pointing to her head are you alright here? Kapila, taken a back, yes, I think so. Padmini, how about your eyes, did they work properly? Kapila, yes, Padmini showing her in four fingers how many? Kapila, 4, Padmini, correct, so nothing is wrong with your eyes as for the other thing I will have to take you on trust, well then if you are sure you wanted this house, why were you peering at all those doors and what you mumbling under your breath, right, so and finally of course Kapila has no choice but to tell him that he's here on behalf of his friend Devadatta which is when Padmini discovers the real reason for why he is here and she runs away bashfully because she realizes that he has come on behalf of his friend to ask for hand in marriage.

The Bhagavata as the Sutradhar of the play always appears at moments in the play when it's not possible for the characters themselves to express or speak, so there is a point when after the match has been made between Padmini and Devadatta, the Bhagavata steps into say that this could only have been the most logical and natural conclusion, right, because this is the only way in which a marriage could have been possible, because Padmini could never have married Kapila who was the son of a blacksmith, so legitimate union would be between Padmini the daughter of a merchant and Devadatta who is a Brahmin.

Need one explain to a wise and knowing audience what followed next, Padmini is the daughter of the leading merchant in Dharmapura, in her house the very flow is wet by the goddess of wealth, in Devadatta's house they have the goddess of learning from it, what could then possibly stand in the way of bringing the families together, Padmini became the better half of Devadatta and settle in his house, not that Devadatta forget his debt to Kapila, the old friendship flourished as before, Devadatta, Padmini, Kapila to the admiring citizens of Dharmapura, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, right, so it seems as though Kapila has introduced to the status of brother in law.

Then they decide to go on the trip to the Kali temple, but Devadatta is very reluctant to go on a trip with Kapila because he's unable to find any time alone with his wife, because Kapila is always with them, he's always intervening, he's always interrupting, he always wants the company, so he's trying to get rid of Kapila despite the fact that he loves Kapila as his own friend, and at this point of the play Padmini is already pregnant, expecting their first child, so they decide to go to the Ujjain Fair on a bullock cart, and on the way they stop at a temple, the road, the journey to the fair is on a very bad road, rather lots of potholes and rocks and they have to stop because Padmini is pregnant and they are worried about her health, and the health of the child, and they stopped in front of a temple.

On the journey Padmini admires Devadatta as he rides the kart, he also looks at, she also admires his muscles much to Devadatta's own jealousy, when she asks him to bring her a

flower that they discovered on the way, it's called the fortunate ladies flower, it's her beautiful flower that Padmini wants and she asks Kapila to climb the tree and bring her those flowers and that is when she ends up admiring his physic, and Devadatta who was jealous at the site of her his wife desire for Kapila, decides to give up his life.

Now it seems as though Devadatta wants to give up his life because he had promised to offer his head to the Goddess Kali if ever Padmini were to become his wife, but it also becomes clear that it's been done out of sheer insecurity and jealousy, so he says to addressing the Goddess he says that give me strength, in fact it's a temple to goddess Kali and he prostrates himself before the Goddess and he says Bhavani Bhairavi, Kali Durga, Maha Maya, mother of all nature, I had forgotten my promise to you, forgive me mother, you fulfill the deepest framing of my life you give me Padmini and I forgot my word, forgive me for I'm here now to carry out my promise, so all the characters seems to in some sense conceal their true intentions for what they do, and what apparently seem to be doing, or they apparently seem to be saying or claiming it's not matched with their own unconscious secret, insecurities and jealousies and desires.

Great indeed is your mercy, even this lonely place some devotee of yours hunt or backs, or a tribes man has left his weapon, who knows how many lives this weapon has sacrificed to you, and so saying that he beheads himself with the sword, and Padmini and Kapila waiting for him and after a while he wondered where he is, and she sends Kapila to go and search of him, and Kapila goes and when he discovers that his friend is beheaded himself he is very, very upset and relevance the loss of his dear friend, and then realizes that he would have to behead himself to spare himself from the societies, sensual and criticism, he says you cut off your head, you cut off your head, oh my dear friend, my dear brother what have you done, why you are so angry with me, did you feel such contempt from me, such abhorrence and in your anger you've forgot that I was ready to die for you, so I think Kapila already knows that perhaps the Devadatta was resentful of and jealous of the fact that his wife desired Kapila more than him.

And in your anger you forgot that I was ready to die for you, if you had asked me to jump in to fire I would have done it, if you had asked me to leave the country I would have done it, if you had asked me to go and drown in the river I would have accept it, due to despise me so much that you couldn't ask me that I did wrong, but you know I don't have the intelligence to know what else I should have done, I couldn't think, and so you have pushed me away, no Devadatta I can't live without you, I can't breathe without you, Devadatta my brother, my guru, my friend, you spin me in this world, accept me as your brother at least in the next, here friend, here I come, as always I follow in your footsteps, and he cuts off his head.

Now meanwhile Padmini is again wondering what happened to Kapila too, she goes in search of the two men and by which time it is dark and she is unable to see clearly and she stumbles on the two bodies, and she again is eleventh full of the two bodies that she see, and she doesn't have the courage to behead herself but she tries to stab herself when the Goddess Kali interrupt.

Now the voice of Kali is not the voice of Hinduism, right, it's not as though Kali is again being represented as a figure of piety, again she is a very, it's more a parody of the idea of Kali then the goddess herself. The voice says hey and Padmini freezes, put it down, put down that sword,

Padmini who is that? Who is that? And there is a tremendous noise of drums after which Padmini shuts her eyes in terror, right.

Now like another very important element that Karnad incorporates from folk drama is the curtain, so a curtain is lowered on stage and taken away to introduce the figure of Kali, and there is a huge terrifying figure with her arm stretched out, her mouth wide opened with her tongue rolling out, the drum stop and the goddess drops her arms and shuts her mouth, it becomes clear that she has been yawning and this is exactly what the stage reaction say to parody, to make fun of the salinity, the fears, ferocity of Kali.

Kali completes a yawn saying alright open your eyes and be quick, don't waste time, Padmini says mother Kali, Kali who is sleeping says yes it's me, there was a time many years ago when at this hour they would have the mangala harathi.

The devotees use to make a defining racket with drums and calls shells and symbols, so he used to be wide awake around now, I've lost the habit, right, so it's almost because she couldn't careless, now times have changed in the modern era no one bothers with rituals, daily rituals, religious pieties and so now she seems to be absolutely bored, it's almost like a very secularized version of the goddess making fun of Hindu piety and piety itself.

Save me mother Padmini says, Kali says I know, I have done that already, and Padmini wonders why the goddess did not prevent the killings of the suicides of the two men, right, why didn't she stop them, and Kali says put this heads back on, and once they attached properly they will come back to life, and of course Padmini betrays her desire for the two men and in the excitement of bringing them back to life ends up transposing the two heads. And when Padmini wonders why Kali did not stop the two beheadings Kali says the rascals, they were lying to the last breathe, so again Kali's voice is there to actually expose the hypocrisy, the pretends of these two men who pretend to make these large claims of piety and sacrifice but actually end up revealing how insecure they were over their desire love for Padmini, the rascals they were lying to the their last breathes that fellow Devadatta he had once promised head to Rudra and his arms to me, think of it, head to him and arms to me, then because he insisted on going to the Rudra temple he comes here and offers his head normally too, wants to keep his word he says, no other reason, then this Kapila died right in front of me, but for his friend, mind you didn't even have the courtesy to refer to me, and what lies says he's dying for friendship, he must have known perfectly well, he would be accused of killing Devadatta for you.

Do you think he wouldn't have grabbed you if it hadn't been for that fear, but till his last breathe oh my friend, my dear brother only you spoke to the truth, so it's interesting that the goddess says that Devadatta actually want to sacrifice his head to Rudra and his arms to Kali, and wasn't really interested, he wasn't really devoted to Kali herself. Kapila was really more interested in sacrificing lies life to save himself from social stigma from the acquisitions of having love to another man's wife and also because of his love for his friend ends up offering his own head, so neither of them actually seems to have any devotion for Kali, and Padmini apparently is the only one who is being true to herself, not let to the goddess but to herself by betraying the fact that she desires both the men, Padmini says it's all your grace mother, Kali says don't drag me into it, I had nothing to do with it, you spoke the truth because you're

selfish, that's all, right, so she is selfish because she wants both the men, right, and she is true, she is true that she is, she confesses that yes she wants both.

So Padmini is initially the three characters when they come back to life after the transposition they're all excited and happy and they laugh over the fact that they have exchanged heads, but then overtime they realize what's happened and Padmini ends up walking away with choosing the man with Devadatta's head and Kapila's body, because she has the best of both worlds, so they actually ends up leaving with him, leaving the body with Devadatta's head and Kapila's body behind.

There is again a huge dilemma on who is the father of the child, who is the actual husband, is it the body, the hand that held Padmini's hand in marriage or is it the head of Devadatta which loved her because of his poetic abilities, so who exactly is the lawful husband, and who is the lawful father of the unborn child, is it the one the man, the father with the body or the father with the mind, and there is no clear solution to this answer at this point in the play.

As time progresses the mind it begins to influence the body, right, so Devadatta you know initially indulges, engages in the gymnasium in wrestling right, which is something he's never done before because he has a strong body, but that also changes because of body begins to exert each influence of the mind and he begins to actually lose his musculature, you also see a transformation in Padmini's desire for Devadatta, because Padmini begins to miss the manly masculine scent of his body as in Kapila's body, but then Devadatta has been using, he claims that he's been using sandal oil since he was a child, and Padmini says I don't mean that, your body had that strong male smell before and I liked it, but when we came back from temple of Kali you use to smell so manly, so why have you basically started applying sandal oil when I missed that unwashed smell which is the smell that reminds her of Kapila, right, the unwashed sweaty smell of Kapila and at this point you have the three dolls will appear as the way of trying to dramatize the inner desires, the forbidden inner desires of Padmini.

So the dolls are in some sense dramatizing this illicit proscribed desire within the head of married women, and they're also very gossipy and judgmental dolls who consistently judge Padmini and her son for being extremely deceptive and manipulative.

Not a bad house I would say, doll 1, not a bad house I would say. Doll 2, could have been worse, I was little worried. Doll 1, this is the least we deserve, actually we should have got a palace, a real palace. Doll 2, and a price to play with, a real prince. Doll 1, how they shouldn't look at also the fair, how the eyes glowed. Doll 2, how their mother stare at us, how they mouths watered. Doll 2, how their mother stare at us, how they mouths watered. Doll 1, only those beastly men turned up their noses, expensive, too expensive. Doll 2, presuming to judge us, who do they think they are? Doll 1, only a prince could be bothered of us. Doll 2, we should be dusted every day. Doll 1, dressed in silk. Doll 2, seated in a cushion shelf. Doll 1, given new clothes every week. Doll 2, if the doll make had any sense he never have sold us. Doll 1, if he had any brains he should never have given us to this man. Doll 2, with his rough laborers hand, of course referring to Kapila's hands which are on Devadatta's body.

Then he also have again on page 158, the ways in which the dolls actually echo Padmini's illicit fantasies for Kapila, it says Devadatta goes to doll 1 moves it aside and picks up the book, doll 1 shadows, doll 2 asks why what happened? Doll 1, he touched me. And doll 2 yes. Doll 1, his palms they were so rough ones, when he first brought us here like a laborers, but now they are soft, sickly soft like a young girls, so the dolls function is also to register the transformation in the body of Devadatta who is now losing his rough bruteness and as acquired the soft a feminine body of an intellectual Brahmin. Doll 2, I know I have noticed something too. Doll 1, what? Doll 2, his stomach, it was so tight and muscular. Now doll 1, I know it's soft and loose. Doll 2, do you think it will swell up too? Doll 1, holding its hands in front of its stomach to suggest her swollen belly, it will swell a little. Doll 2 holding its hands a little further in front then more. Doll 1, even further more. And doll 2, even further and more until. Doll 1, if it's a women. Doll 2, they will be a child. Doll 1, and if it's a man. Doll 2, bang, the role with laughter.

So it suggesting the registering the transform, the botley transformation in Devadatta but it's also suggesting Padmini's growing dislike or distastes for Devadatta's increasingly you know body that's quickly losing its definition.

A continuation of that fantasy, doll 1, hey. Doll 2, yes. Doll 1, look. Doll 2, where? Doll 1 behind here eye lids, she is dreaming. Doll 2, I don't see anything. Doll 1, it's still easy, hasn't started yet, do you see it now? Doll 2, eagerly yes, yes. Doll 1, a man. Doll 2, but not her husband. Doll 1, no someone else. Doll 2, is this the one who came last night? Doll 1, yes, the same, but I couldn't see his face then. Doll 2, you can now, not very nice, rough, like a laborers, but he has got a nice body, looks soft. Doll 1, who do you think it is? Doll 2, its fading, remember the face. Doll 1, its fading, oh it's gone. Doll 2, and she wouldn't even remember it tomorrow and so on, that is Padmini's longing for Kapila, but what she tells Devadatta is something very different, so she says what you're afraid of Devadatta, what is that matter that you are going soft again, that you are losing your muscles, I'm not going to be stupid again, Kapila's gone out of my life forever, I won't let him comeback again, Kapila, what could he be doing now when this is to herself, where could he be? Could his body be fair still? And his face is dark, Devadatta changes, Kapila changes and me, so while the two mens into change right, in the respective ways Padmini doesn't seem to change, because she stills desires Kapila throughout the play.

Padmini decides to take her son out on trip to the forest, and that is where they discover Kapila after long time, and here again Padmini unable to actually acknowledge her desire for Kapila openly, because she is a married woman and the Bhagavata steps in to actually speak for Padmini, she takes on Padmini's perspective, and when Kapila asks Padmini that why have you moved away from Devadatta, why have you come here? And Bhagavata says on Padmini's behalf how could I make you understand if Devadatta had changed overnight, and I'm gone back to its original form, I would have forgotten you completely, but that's not how it happened, he changed day by day, inch by inch, hair by hair, like the trickling sand, like the water filling the pot, and as I saw him changed I couldn't get rid of you, that's what Padmini must tell Kapila, she should say more without considering anything. Kapila with that Rishi had given me to you, would have gone back to Devadatta someday exactly like this, but she doesn't say anything, she remains silent, right, she remain silent she will not be sure her desire for the

two men remains and this is not very clear what would have happened if the reverse had happened, if she had chosen the body with Kapila's head and Devadatta's body what would have happened? So the two men remains substitutable, they remain interchangeable to each other for Padmini's desire.

You also see the influence that the body has on a mind, right, so when Kapila says this body is mine, right, she says he talks about his own body Devadatta's body which has been transformed by his hard labour, he talks about the memories that his body has, the body of his Devadatta's body bears the memories of Padmini's touch, so he says one beats the body into shape, but one can't beat with the memories trapped in it, isn't that surprising that the body should have its own ghost, it's own secrets, memories of touch, memories of a touch, memories of a body swaying in his arms of a warm skin against this palm, memories which one cannot recognize cannot understand, cannot even name because this head wasn't there when they had, right, so the body isn't subordinate to the head, it also seems to have its own autonomous life, it's own bodily memory, right, so the body can remember the touch of Padmini, but the head cannot

And later on when Devadatta and Kapila meet, they realize they have both been transformed by the heads and their bodies, they almost begin to resemble each other, but then they realize that they have betrayed each other, they're not able to live with each other in themselves, right, so Kapila is not able to bare the fact that he has Devadatta's body, Devadatta is not able to bare the fact that he has Kapila's body, and that they have both been transformed by the transposition, and the fact that they both desired Padmini, when Padmini desires both of them, so it's not possible for them to live together, right.

So they end up having a fight, a duel in which they end up killing each other, so they're unable to actually reconcile the dilemma between head and body and they end up killing each other, and Padmini herself burns herself on the funeral pyre by committing sati, but since sati is traditionally meant to be performed by the faithful wife of a man who has died, a woman who proclaims or claims her fidelity to her husband, here this sati is Padmini who is committing a sati for the two men, both of whom she loved and desired. Thus the Bhagavata says, thus Padmini became a sati, India is known for his pativratas, wives who dedicated their whole existence to the service of their husbands, but it would not be an exaggeration to say that no pativrata went in the way Padmini did, and yet no one knows the spot where she performed sati, if you ask the hunting tribes to develop this forest, the only point to a full blossom tree of the fortunate lady, is the same flower, the same flowering tree that Padmini had admired earlier on their trip to the Ujjain Fair and when she asks Kapila to bring her the flower for the tree, they say that even now on full moon and on new moon nights a song rises from the roots of the tree, and feels the whole forest like the fragments, so in some sense this is also a satire, a parody of the very ritual of sati which is meant to be conducted performed by wife who is faithful to her only husband.

And the play is framed as I mentioned earlier by Hayavadana's predicament as a symbol of the post-colonial subject where again he is reappears towards the end of the play, desperately trying to get rid of all human science, so he is not able to get rid of his voice and he can only use his voice to sing the national anthem, they also left with Padmini's son who was been abundant and often by the death of his parents, and the predicament of the son is also like the predicament of

Hayavadana because he is also the future of the nation, he symbolizes the future of the nation, right, so Hayavadana does not know what the future has in store, right, because he becomes that hybrid post-colonial subject whose resolution with the future, right, and has lost the romanticism, the excitement of the freedom struggle, and is the legality of the hybrid latency of the colonial and indigenous, right.

So he says that he had actually begged a goddess to make him complete, and the goddess appeared very prompt and look rather put out, she said rather previously I thought, why don't you people go somewhere else if you want to chop off your stupid heads, why do you want to come to me, I fell at her feet and said mother make me complete, she said so beat and disappear, and so that's the goddess Kali makes Hayavadana into a horse, but a horse with a human voice, that is condemned to chant or same boundary the patriotic songs for the national anthem, thank you.

**CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY
IIT GUWAHATI
PRODUCTION**

HEAD CET

Prof. Sunil k. Khijwania

Officer-in-Charge, CET

Dr. Subhajit Choudhary

CET Production Team

Alphul Gogoi
Bikash Jyoti Nath
CS Bhaskar Bora
Dibyajyoti Lahkar
Kallal Barua
Kaushik Kr. Sarma
Mriganka Borah
Queen Barman
Rekha Hazarika
Rajib Mahapatra
Sanjib Phukan

CET Administrative staff

Arabinda Dewry
Swapan Debnath