

Some Traits of Human Psyche and the Attainment of Moksha/Mukti in Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala: Play with a Cobra* and *Flowers: A Dramatic Monologue*

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Abstract: Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala: Play with a Cobra* and *Flowers: A Dramatic Monologue* provide the reader with immense opportunities to explore the human psyche from various perspectives. Since Indian history, society, myths and folktales play a huge role in forming the background of Karnad's plays; therefore, a researcher finds it more comfortable to explore the Indian psyche in Karnad's characters. In both these plays the concept of Indian psyche plays an important role in sketching out the human unconscious and without which Freud's theory of unconscious remains incomplete in this regard. While *Naga-Mandala* depicts the feminine desires *Flowers* displays the various traits and consequences of the male sexual instincts. But, in both the plays, the theme does not remain confined within the sexual instincts of the unconscious and develops into an incident that makes the individual realize the freedom of the spirit and the devotion to God. My research paper focuses on Karnad's presentation of the human unconscious in Girish Karnad's two plays *Naga-Mandala* and *Flowers*. This paper attempts to highlight the basic traits of human psyche that add to the general concept of human unconscious propounded by Sigmund Freud and make it easier for us to understand the working of this unconscious when placed against the backdrop of Indian myth and folktales. My paper also focuses on the concept of Moksha and Mukti that seem to become the ultimate goal of the individual and which get manifested in different ways to bring to the subject a sense of relief, satisfaction and emancipation in these two plays.

Keywords: Human Psyche, Unconscious, Shiva Linga, Mandala, Moksha, Mukti, Female and Male Desires, Myth, Folktales, Freedom.

A psychoanalytical reading of Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala: Play with a Cobra* and *Flowers: A Dramatic Monologue* provides us with enough scope and opportunity to explore and understand the human unconscious that stores the psychic energy and motivates it to flow through various levels of human psychology and enables the subject to realize the pleasure through fantasy and avoid the pain through repression thus empowering him or her with the ability to keep the libido and other instinctive desires in check. Karnad's subjects become the very battleground over which reality and fantasy lay their claim. In both the plays Freud's pleasure-principle and reality principle come into a serious conflict which is manifested and executed through the phallic object

(Cobra/Linga) which is expected to satisfy the drive and enable the accumulating excitation be discharged. The overlapping of the reality and the fantasy creates a hybrid space that opens a new passage for the auto-eroticism and the latency to be realized by the individual and, the matter is further enhanced by the folk narration and silhouetted mythical atmosphere that bring into effect the collective discourse of a whole culture which is Indian and which is rooted into the Indian social and traditional history thus rendering the unconscious of the individual an Indian colour. In both these plays the concept of Indian psyche plays an important role in sketching out the human unconscious and without which Freud's theory of unconscious remains incomplete in this regard. Karnad uses various paradigms to materialize his dramatic theme which is largely based on the concept of Indian psyche. Myth and folktale contribute to the formation of the collective unconscious and reside within the individual's unconscious as the psychic residue or archetype and become a part of it. Jung's theory of collective unconscious provides a major support to Karnad's dramatic oeuvre and makes the psychic pattern in an individual more comprehensible in the Indian context. The archetype allows the fantasy to realize the latent desire in an individual, though the archetype itself cannot be separated from the reality. Reality on the other hand intrudes within the psychic space where the instinctual desires and the archetype form a cohesive structure that gives rise to a sequestered pattern and influences the ego of the individual. Karnad's characters oscillate between the outside reality and the fantasy generated by the instinctual-archetypal space. This allows the reader to discover a new perspective for analyzing and reciprocating the human unconscious. Myths and folktales are unhistorical though not rootless. In Karnad's plays the Indian myths and folktales provide a strong platform for the development of the human unconscious and play a very significant role in their working. Since Karnad's plays are rooted in the Indian culture therefore the Indian-ness of the human psyche becomes the point of focus while critically evaluating the human unconscious in his plays. My research paper focuses on Karnad's presentation of the human unconscious in Girish Karnad's two plays *Naga-Mandala* and *Flowers*. This paper attempts to highlight the basic traits of human psyche that add to the general concept of human unconscious propounded by Sigmund Freud and make it easier for us to understand the working of this unconscious when placed against the backdrop of Indian myth and folktales. My paper also focuses on the concept of Moksha and Mukti that seem to become the ultimate goal of the individual and which get manifested in different ways to bring to the subject a sense of relief, satisfaction and emancipation in these two plays.

Naga-Mandala is based on two oral tales from Karnataka which Karnad first heard from A.K. Ramanujan several years ago. These tales are narrated by women—normally the elder women in the family—to the

children. It is the story of a young woman Rani, newly married to Appanna. Appanna is a cruel husband. He is having an affair with another woman of the village. Being separated from her parents, Rani finds it difficult to live with Appanna. Appanna comes home only during the day, takes his bath and lunch, and goes away after locking Rani inside the house. Kurudavva, an old blind woman with a son Kappanna, comes to her rescue by giving her a love potion to win over her cruel husband's love and sympathy. But the love potion is eaten up by a cobra (Naga in the play) by mistake and he falls in love with Rani. Every night he assumes the shape of Appanna and comes to Rani when she is alone, and makes love with her. Rani becomes pregnant. Appanna is furious to find it and wants justice from the Village Elders. Rani is ignorant about the existence of Naga and thinks that it is her husband who makes love to her every night. Naga is not happy at Rani's plight. Without disclosing his real identity he asks Rani to swear her innocence by undergoing the snake ordeal and utter the truth. Rani obeys Naga's instructions and the King Cobra does no harm to her. The Village Elders take it as a miracle and declare her to be a Goddess incarnate. A transformation comes in Appanna's nature and he becomes an obedient slave to her. He leaves his sinful ways. Naga, the Cobra, cannot forget Rani. The playwright provides a couple of endings to the play. According to the first ending of the play the Naga kills itself by getting entangled in Rani's hair and Rani wants him to be cremated with the prescribed rituals. According to the second ending of the play Rani accepts Naga and makes him a part of her hair for life. The play *Naga-Mandala* derives its name from the ritual of Naga-Mandala and Naga worship practised over a vast area of India among the Hindus. Naga worship is a common and widely celebrated ritual in India. The Hindu mythology has observed snake-worship as a very sacred ritual and snakes are seen as the entities of strength and renewal. The concept of Mandala depicts several things. It is a circular design that represents the various levels of human psychology with the unconscious or the id at the centre. Mandala also depicts the various circles of human life and spirituality that gradually unfold and lead the individual towards emancipation or Mukti as depicted in the Hindu religion. Therefore the mandala acts as a representative medium for the process of emancipation of human unconscious and the human soul. 'Mandala' in the play *Naga-Mandala* plays a distinct role of a sign, a symbol, a signifier that helps in the construction of meaning of the play. In the Indian context the Naga (Snake) and Mandala have become a part of the collective unconscious that often dictates the personal unconscious of an individual. Myth, folktale, religion, family, society and culture are some of the innumerable elements that remain within the human unconscious as psychic residues that are inherited from the ancestors and shared by the members of a community through ages. Naga-worship and the concept of Mandala are the common archetypal symbolic elements that are shared

by most of the Indian Hindus. Therefore, these concepts play an important role in the development and understanding of the human unconscious in the Indian context. According to Jung the collective unconscious is expressed through some archetypal symbols and patterns that are inherited by human being from its previous generations and are expressed from time to time as the individual strives for individuation. Even a newborn baby's psyche contains such archetypal patterns or symbols. According to Jung the mandala helps in the revelation of inner psychological patterns and processes that reside in the unconscious thus having a healing effect on the concerned individual by providing him or her stability and peace. In Karnad's play *Naga-Mandala* Rani's psyche contains the traditional archetypal patterns of Indian patriarchy, family, marriage and social subjugation and exploitations of women in Indian society. That is why she leaves her family and accepts her fate after marriage. But this gives rise to inner conflict, anxiety and trauma that reside in her id and continues to influence her ego. The Naga or the Cobra presents the symbolic Mandala for Rani that helps her in realizing the inner processes and conflicts of the psyche and also helps her to achieve the Moksha or Mukti of life. She becomes the actual Rani or the Queen by gaining control over everything.

In the Play *Naga-Mandala* Naga or the Cobra forms a symbolic circle that coils around Rani's life and makes its way into her unconscious and forces out the libido or the latent psycho-sexual energy in her and releases the id from the anxiety and excitement through the fulfilment of desire. This leads the individual to the path of Mukti or the ultimate emancipation. The emancipation of Rani is manifested in the realization of the instincts of her unconscious. This realization helps her in getting free from the anxiety that developed in her consciousness due to the unfulfilled desire of the unconscious. This freedom is the liberation of her unconscious, her soul and which can be termed as the Mukti from the bonds of patriarchy. The Naga-Mandala or the Naga-Circle acts as a bonding and also the medium for the subject to attain fulfilment and emancipate from the shackles of exploitation. In *Naga-Mandala* Rani achieves the Moksha, jouissance and the pleasure through sex and accomplishment of her feminine desire. In *Flowers* the Priest achieves the Moksha and gets his libido released through total devotion to the Almighty, the Shiva Linga. The id is regarded as the great reservoir of libido and the instincts and latent desires. The libido or the sex drive acts for achieving pleasure. The libido and the sexual drive of Rani find expression through her sexual relationship with Naga. Not only does Rani get her sexual desire satisfied but also attains marital satisfaction, mental stability and social honour that are intensely craved for by any Indian woman. She succeeds in subverting the instruments of patriarchy and holds her control on life. Initially the thorny shackles of patriarchal oppressions coil around Rani like the mandala to make her suffer like a bonded labour in the hands of

her cruel husband Appanna. It presents a common picture of female exploitation illegally practised in many Indian families. The Cobra brings into effect the concept of Mandala that gradually unfolds the circles of Rani's psyche, releases the conflict and trauma, and enables her to obtain the pleasure and drive out the unpleasure. The mandala doubtlessly depicts the various circular levels of Rani's psyche. The Mandala also identifies the circles of life that a Hindu is supposed to transcend to attain Moksha or Mukti. Rani finds the Mukti or emancipation through the fulfilment of her desire. But Moksha or Mukti has its significance in the Indian context. Moksha, also called Mukti, means emancipation, liberation or release from the cycle of birth and rebirth and also from every bonding of earthly life. It is a vital concept related to the human life and is depicted in the Hindu religion with great importance and eminence. It also depicts the sense of freedom, self-realization and self-knowledge. We cannot confirm Rani's spiritual mukti but her psychological emancipation and sexual freedom get manifested through the Naga. The Naga represents the symbolic mandala or the cyclic maze around her and helps her in unfolding the various levels of human psyche. The gradual release of the latent libido in Rani and the ultimate freedom that she achieves mark her psychological and sexual Moksha or Mukti. The Naga or the Cobra becomes a symbolic body that represents the mandala and evokes the emancipation of Rani and helps her in realizing the latent feminine desire.

The ego is a part of our personality that actually forms the consciousness. The ego controls our mental activities and helps us to realize the surrounding reality by differentiation. Id is that part of the human psychology which forms the unconscious of an individual and acts as a storehouse for all the instincts, needs, psychic energies, anxieties, traumas, desires and drives that influence and control human activities. Rani's ego is overwhelmed by the id that seeks to satisfy the libido and abides by the pleasure-principle. This is the main reason behind Rani's failure to differentiate between Naga and Appanna. Rani is guided by the pleasure principle and discards the reality principle. The mythical and folkloric discourse provides her with the opportunity to realize the unconscious thus giving it a typical Indian colour and identity. This also helps her in achieving the Moksha or the Mukti. In *Flowers* the Priest's ego initially listens to the dictates of the pleasure principle. Chandravati, the courtesan, remains as a source of pleasure for the Priest for a certain time. The reality intrudes into the ego and gives rise to the sense of guilt within the id. The Shiva Linga, which was a source of completeness and satisfaction for him turns into a source of trauma and anxiety as the impending threat of separation from his Dharma and God looms large on him. Reality principle replaces the pleasure principle and he seeks Moksha or Mukti from this trauma and displeasure. According to Antony Easthope the ego is developed as a system which discriminates between

real and unreal so that the unconscious does not waste its time on hallucinations and can achieve the real gratification even if it is deferred. The superego or the conscience works over the various rules and principles of culture, morality and society that an individual experiences and imbibes from society and family. These principles are organized by the superego and act as guiding forces for the individual. The conscience acts as a filtrating body that keeps our unconscious desires in check and helps the individual to maintain a balance with the surroundings. The conscience is also responsible for making an individual realize any misdeed and the consequent sense of guilt and suffering that come as a punishment for the person who indulges in illegal and unsocial activities like extra-marital affair. In case of Rani the super-ego or the conscience does not seem to exercise any significant influence on her ego. In fact the sense of guilt never gets the opportunity to grow within her. The reality principle fails to intrude into Rani's id and we see the entire situation gradually getting transformed from the real to the fantasy. Rani is sinned against. Her ego does not carry any sense of guilt because she indulges in extramarital affair with the Naga (who is under the disguise of her husband Appanna) without knowing the reality. The silhouetted atmosphere continues to facilitate the development of the fantasy and Rani fails to distinguish between Appanna and Naga. Therefore, the reality principle never gets an opportunity to play its role in case of Rani. There is no question of guilt and atonement or prayaschitta. On the other hand in *Flowers* the Priest fails to control his libido and his unconscious(id) takes control over his ego. He knowingly indulges in extramarital affairs and commits the sin of sacrilege thus betraying his wife and Dharma. For him the pleasure principle initially dominates his actions when he indulges in illegal relationship with the courtesan and violates the sanctity of the temple by desecrating the religious ritual of the Linga worship by offering his God the flowers that he uses to decorate his mistress. But, later the conscience comes into play and the sense of guilt develops which makes him pray for atonement (Prayaschitta). This urge for atonement drives him to surrender all his desires and makes him pay his complete devotion to the God thus leading him towards Moksha or the Mukti that provides him with the real knowledge. The sense and concept of purity, religious sanctity, Linga-worship, family, society, culture and others constitute the collective unconscious of the individual that checks the instinctual desires and finally releases the individual from the trauma of sin. The individual attains complete freedom that leads him towards spiritual salvation and releases him from earthly bonding.

The two transformations are differently motivated and developed in these two plays of Karnad. While the Priest achieves spiritual freedom Rani gains her sexual and social freedom. Both of them have different interpretations of the Moksha or the Mukti. In both the plays the phallic imagery is used as a medium for emancipation. In *Naga-Mandala* the

Cobra or the Naga becomes the replacement for the male sexual organ which is the object of pleasure for Rani. Since Rani cannot achieve her pleasure and satisfy her libido through her husband Appanna, Naga becomes the object of sexual gratification for her. While talking about Freud's observation on femininity in his book *The Unconscious* Antony Easthope says that according to Freud both the boy and the girl begin with redirecting the phallic desire towards the mother. In case of a boy the Oedipal transition takes place from the mother to another woman. The father's jealousy and the incest factor act as prohibitory elements that stop the boy from indulging in sexual relationship with the mother. On the other hand the absence of the penis in the mother acts as a shock for him that makes him suffer from castration complex. In case of a girl Oedipal transition takes from the mother to the father and then to another adult man. The mother's jealousy and the incest factor act as prohibitory elements that stop the girl from indulging in sexual relationship with the father. But, while the boy child is merely threatened by castration the girl child experiences it when she actually realizes that the female organ(clitoris) cannot be a substitute for the male organ(penis). The Naga becomes a symbolic substitute for the male organ for Rani and not only does it serve as an object of sexual pleasure but also becomes an instrument for her to make her husband an obedient slave. It also minimizes her feminine trauma of castration complex. She also achieves her sexual freedom by keeping both Appanna and the Naga as her loyal sexual partners. Sexual freedom, consummation and the attainment of a respectable social position as a woman in the Indian society bring to her the freedom from all 'unpleasure' and suffering. This can be compared with the Moksha or the Mukti. According to Sudhir Kakar, an eminent Indian psychiatrist and writer of the modern times,

The term moksha has been variously taken to mean self-realization, transcendence, salvation, a release from worldly involvement, from 'coming' and 'going'. Yet in Hindu philosophy it is also described as the state in which all distinctions between subject and object have been transcended, a direct experience of the fundamental unity of human being with the infinite. (Kakar, 16)

Moksha asks for total surrender and devotion to God and the Mukti is achieved from the union with God. According to Hindu belief union with the Almighty cannot be achieved if the concerned individual cannot surrender himself/herself to God. In case of Rani we see her achieving the sexual pleasure and the freedom from oppression. The Naga can be taken as a symbol of the Linga (the Shiva Linga) or God's authority. The union with the Naga can be taken as a symbolic union of Rani with God through which she attains her emancipation or the Mukti. According to ancient Hindu philosophy and the various concepts related to Linga worship the union with God provides the individual with immense spiritual satisfaction that can be compared with intense sexual excitement and fulfilment. This leads to the Mukti. For the Naga, his union with Rani

provides him with pleasure but at the same time makes him suffer. He even bleeds while fighting with the watchdog brought by Appanna, but he never stops from meeting with Rani. He achieves pleasure but at the same time suffers from the sense of losing Rani. It is the *jouissance*, as propounded by Lacan, which is experienced by Naga. *Jouissance* is not like the pleasure that Rani enjoys. *Jouissance* is accompanied by pain. Pleasure and pain are within Lacan's category of need. At the end, according to the first ending of the play Naga commits suicide after getting separated from Rani. This is due to the trauma of loss and separation. Sudhir Kakar says that the sense of loss and the fear of getting separated are more intense in India compared to that of the West. This is because, according to Kakar, an Indian exercises stronger and greater social-political-religious bonding compared to any individual with a Western background. Rani had also experienced the same trauma of separation from her parents after she was married to Appanna. Karnad presents Rani as the ideal woman. Karnad also hints at the dangerous issue of a woman keeping two husbands and obtaining social consent for extramarital affair. Karnad's dramatic craftsmanship lies in the characterization of Rani and the dramatization of the whole situation that stop us from classifying Rani as an unchaste woman in spite of her irregular activities. Rani stands as pure and chaste which even the Hindu philosophy cannot deny. Rani has achieved what she deserves. She has emerged successful and stands justified in her attempt to subvert patriarchal oppressions and in achieving her *Mukti*. Since everything has occurred against the backdrop of Indian myth and folktales that are touched by the purity of sacred Hindu culture and since the actions pertain to the desires of human unconscious, therefore allegations against Rani's character seem to be framed and misjudged. Rani's consciousness seems to remain unaware of the reality and her ego remains pure though the situation provides her unconscious(id) with the opportunity to fulfil her desire. It is obvious that Rani emerges as a good woman and remains within the boundaries of an ideal Hindu wife. Hindu philosophy does not find any harm in a woman who fights for her right and achieves what she deserves. Even Draupadi, in *Mahabharata*, remained chaste and pure in spite of marrying five husbands, the Pandavas. At the end of the play Rani finds herself as an ideal woman who has achieved everything that a Hindu woman craves for in life. When Naga tells her to follow his words without questioning Rani desperately tries to establish her identity as a woman free from all sorts of oppressions and restrictions. Rani explicitly expresses her feeling of being a complete woman after realizing her pregnancy through the words,

RANI(blankly):...I was a stupid, ignorant girl when you brought me here. But now I am a woman, a wife, and I am going to be a mother. I am not a parrot. Not a cat or a sparrow. Why don't you take it on trust that I have a mind and explain this charade to me? Why do you play these games? Why do you change like a chameleon from day to night? Even if I

understood a little, a tiny bit—I could bear it. But now—sometimes I feel my head is going to burst! (Karnad. *Collected Plays*. Vol. I, 283-284)

This attainment of completeness can be termed as the emancipation of Rani and her attainment of Mukti. Here, we cannot define Mukti of Rani on the spiritual terms, but if we consider the initial adversities and subjugation faced by her and the sexual freedom and fulfilment that she ultimately achieves by becoming a complete woman and establishing her control over patriarchy, society and herself then this achievement can be equated with the ultimate goal of human life that Hindu philosophy relates. Rani devotes herself completely to her husband irrespective of his (Appanna/Naga) fluctuating identity and attains her goal of life through the desired Moksha or Mukti from all sorts of pain and sufferings. Sudhir Kakar says, 'As posited by Hindu culture, the ultimate aim of existence, the chief *purushartha* ('man's meaning'), is *moksha* or *mukti*.' (Kakar, 16). Rani attains the meaning of her life and it is realized through her complete freedom and emancipation.

Flowers: A Dramatic Monologue is again an important instance of Karnad's use of Indian myth and folktales as a backdrop to the development of the human character and portrayal of the human unconscious. This play exclusively focuses on the male sexual desire and the dilemma that occurs to a man when he is torn between his Dharma and Bhakti (devotion) for his God on the one side and his carnal desire on the other. The legend of Veeranna, the Priest, on which the play is based belongs to the Chitradurg region, and became widely known when a Kannada writer T.R. Subbanna included it in his novel *Hamsageete* (1952). The Priest is widely acclaimed for his worship and devotion to the Siva Linga. He enjoys a highly respectable position in society and family. But, the married priest has been passionately in love with a mistress Chandravati, the courtesan, to whom he takes the offerings from the temple after every prayer. One day the palegar (Chieftain) discovers a hair in the 'prasada' (flowers) and demands an explanation from the priest. The Priest claims that the hair belongs to God (the Shiva Linga). The Chieftain asks him to prove the truth and Veeranna starts meditating within the inner sanctum closed from outside. After twelve days miracle happens when the Chieftain arrives on the scheduled day and to his utter astonishment finds that the Shivalinga has indeed sprouted long silken hairs, and when one of his Brahmins pulls out a tuft to test its authenticity, blood begins to ooze out from the crown of the Linga. In spite of committing sacrilege God has forgiven the Priest. The sense of guilt intensifies within him and he denies to continue with life that is burdened with the sin of adultery and sacrilege. He submerges his head into the water to find out the answer to his questions. The playwright does not specify about his death or self-sacrifice but hints at the impending self annihilation that is craved by the priest for Moksha and Mukti. In *Flowers* the phallic symbol Shiva Linga becomes a source of salvation for the Priest. Its benignity and benevolence drive him to the complete renunciation of the worldly desires

and strive for attaining Moksha or the Mukti. Total submission to God comes after the arousal of the sense of guilt within the psyche of the individual. The ego brings into play the reality-principle which comes into conflict with the pleasure hunt exercised by the unconscious of the Priest. His illegal relationship with the courtesan is an outcome of the unchecked drive of the id that aims at the release of the libido at any cost. The family, religious sanctity and love for God give rise to the sense of guilt within the conscience of Veeranna. He experiences pleasure mixed with pain and threat of separation. This can be equated with Lacan's jouissance. The reality intrudes into the space of the unconscious and the pangs of separation from God or loss of God's blessings and the resulting trauma ultimately force him to give up all material pleasures and prepare for total submission to God. God's kindness and His reward of absolution intensify the guilt in him and also the anxiety and trauma that result from the guilt. This leads him to self sacrifice. This also marks the completion of the process of attaining Moksha or Mukti. Hindu religion and Hindu philosophy play a very significant role in the development of the action of the play. The Priest's devotion to God and the desire for Mukti help him to stop from committing further abominable acts and motivate the unconscious to flow into a different path that is more controlled and guided by the reality. His self-sacrifice indicates his total submission to God and his release from all sorts of earthly bonding which is the prime condition for Mukti. The fantasy comes to an end and the trauma of separation from God and religion further compels the ego to realize the 'unpleasure' of reality and commit the self sacrifice for achieving Mukti. This cannot be equated with Freud's instinct of self destruction. In case of the Priest it is a total submission to God and the complete abandonment of latent desires and instincts of the unconscious which gradually lead to self annihilation and result in spiritual union with God. The concept of Moksha and Mukti or emancipation cannot be easily understood by a person who does not have a firsthand knowledge of the Indian society, myth, culture and the Hindu religion and philosophy. Freudian concept of the pleasure-unpleasure principle and the Lacanian concept of trauma and anxiety cannot fully explain the reason behind the self-sacrifice. It cannot be termed as a suicide which is an act of aggression made by the unconscious against the ego and which brings back the reality along with the unpleasure trauma. Rather it is a desire to get complete freedom or Mukti from the material world and to get united with God. The Priest is more burdened with the unexpected and impartial benevolence of God ushered on him than with the sin of adultery and sacrilege. He cannot think himself going unpunished by God. His words clearly state his mental trauma and anxiety,

The Chieftain was right to question me, to humiliate me publicly if he so decided. I am guilty of gross dereliction, of sacrilege. Guilty of cruelty to the two women I loved. Why then should God cast his vote on my behalf? Because I loved Him? Or does He have a different logic? If He does, it's

not fair that He should expect me to abide by it, not demanding to know what that logic is. Such Grace is condescension even it comes from God. Why am I worthy of this burden He has placed on my shoulder? I refuse to bear it. God must understand I simply cannot live on His terms. (Karnad. *Collected Plays*. Vol. II, 260)

This act of the Priest indirectly signifies his complete devotion (Moksha) to God and the desire to get united with the Almighty after attaining purity through punishment. This union with the Almighty is the actual source of pleasure and fulfilment for a Hindu living within the Indian society. Sudhir Kakar's concept of the Indian psyche helps us in understanding this matter profoundly and vividly. In both the plays Karnad deals with the emancipation of the subject and uses the same phallic symbol as a mode for Mukti. The only difference is that while in *Naga-Mandala* sexuality and extramarital affair pave the way toward Mukti through sexual freedom and social establishment, in *Flowers* the same sexual desire and extramarital affair give rise to guilt, trauma, suffering and self sacrifice leading towards Moksha and Mukti, though, both occur in different contexts. The definitions of Moksha and Mukti find different applications but the same meaning for both the characters. The repression mechanism allows both Rani and the Priest to exercise their sexual freedom and stop the 'unpleasure' from intruding into their space of existence. This repression leads Rani to achieve her goal. But, for the Priest this denial of the reality leads to trauma, anxiety and suffering and ultimately the subject is motivated to go through the path of complete devotion and self-sacrifice for attaining Moksha and Mukti. Karnad very beautifully presents the various ways of the workings of the human unconscious in the Indian context where religion, family, culture, history, tradition, myth and folktales play intensely vital roles in constituting the unconscious, developing the ego and motivating the actions of the individual that are intimately related to the Hindu philosophy.

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