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Girish Karnad's *Tughlaq* and *Tale-Danda*: A Study through the Lenses of History and Contemporary Politics

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Abstract

Indian authors, through their works, have tried to point out idiosyncrasies of ruling authorities and have questioned the power equations and the politics related to it. Girish Karnad (1938-2019) was one of them. Critics have found a reflection of political scenario of the country of 1960s-90s in his plays. This paper aims to examine two of his plays: *Tughlaq* (1964) and *Tale-Danda* (1990) and analyse how these plays critique the politics of the time around which the texts are based upon with the help of the lens of New Historicism. This approach would allow the texts to be interpreted by keeping historical events at the forefront. *Tughlaq* looks at the regime of Muhammad bin Tughlaq and his atrocities, whereas *Tale-Danda* deals with the disadvantaged Sharana community and their power struggle.
Keywords: Criticism, manifestations, power, politics, historicism

Introduction

Girish Karnad (1938-2019) is a name of his time. In the scenario of Indian Dramas in English, he represents the Modern Era. His plays like *Tughlaq* (1964), *Hayavadana* (1971) and *Tale-Danda* (1990) have been immensely popular and

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earned critical acclaim. The nation changed vastly after the Independence, and the people of India witnessed layer of experiences like the partition trauma and the associated developmental challenges. The hope for new India was not fulfilled as it was aspired for, due to the political mishaps. Girish Karnad made a point to question the political scenario through his literary works.

Tughlaq marked a criticism of Nehruvian Regime (1947-63). Nehru's era promised a lot of changes for the Independent India. Nehru had an important role in the freedom struggle. When he got elected as the first Prime Minister of Independent India, people hoped that it would bring in widespread changes in the country. To a certain extent, he did bring in changes but a lot of his other ideas did not bear much fruit, despite having a good potential. The 1960s India also saw widespread drought, coupled with refugee issues and unemployment. This prompted many a playwright, writers to critique Nehru in their works – be it Badal Sircar's *Evam Indrajit* (1962) or Karnad's *Tughlaq* (1964). Karnad's *Tale-Danda* (1990), bears a reflection of Identity politics with its influence derived from the aftermaths of the Mandal Commission Reports. The difference between the Sharanas, led by Basavanna and upper-class Hindus and the associated power politics forms the major action in the play.

This paper aims to study different facets of Indian political scenario as reflected in Karnad's plays *Tughlaq* and *Tale-Danda* through the lens of New Historicism, a term coined by Stephen Greenblatt (Nayar 209). This theory de-privileges a literary text and indulges in a parallel reading of the same in light of other non-literary texts produced in the similar time period as that of the literary text (Barry 116). This paper uses New Historicism to evaluate the above-mentioned works of Karnad with the help of secondary non-literary texts *Annihilation of Caste* (1936) by B. R. Ambedkar, Maulana Azad's *India Wins Freedom* (1959) and Durga Das's book *India from Curzon to Nehru and After* (1969). It also has a section involving critical analysis of Nehruvian Regime.

The Basis of Writings of Girish Karnad

Girish Karnad, uses characters from history as well as mythology. In his works like *Yayati* (1961), *Hayavadana* (1971)- the central characters King Yayati and Ganesha respectively represent human virtue and vices on stage. Specially, in case of *Hayavadana*, the allusion to creation of Ganesha regarding the transplantation

of head leads to the addressing of issues of morality and desire in the play (Ramesh 57). Karnad also lays a great emphasis on the psychological functioning of the protagonists, for instance, Tughlaq in the eponymous play, where he plans and eliminates his enemies as a part of the political game or Basavanna in *Tale-Danda*, who stands his ground as a part of Sharana Community, challenging those who are in power. The Readers can understand the rationale behind their actions and their ideology.

Girish Karnad was heavily influenced by the *Yakshagana* form of theatre – which involved traditional dances, masked costumes with significant uses of mythology in it. This style of theatre also involved the usage of musical instruments along with masks to convey emotions and the performance involves retelling of epics on the stage. The theatre form is mainly based in Karnataka and emerged during the Bhakti movement in India. Karnad was inspired by such form of theatre. Along with traditional element, the fusion of western elements can also be seen in his works. In her article Alka Jain states, "Girish Karnad uses Brecht's concept of the epic theatre to alienate the audience from any illusion of reality, so he merges myth and reality in his plays" (34).

In *Tughlaq*, Karnad tries to maintain the scene distributions as followed in Parsi style of theatre, which was mainly based on European Style of Theatre and can be considered as the start of modern theatre in India (Prajapati 1). Karnad, by getting inspired from the Parsi style of theatre, adopted the style of demarcation of the scenes with more important and least important characters as deep and shallow scenes respectively and maintained a demarcation to produce the necessary artistic effects. His works also bear the influences of the Navya Sahitya Movement, which was a prominent literary movement in India during the 1950s that involved the aspects of going beyond the representation of conventional themes in literature and created socially relevant forms of writing. He is even considered as one of the pillars of this movement – which questioned the inherent corruption, conflict of modern vs. tradition and morality through literary works.

Tale-Danda and the Mandal Commission

The play *Tale-Danda* represents the downtrodden sections of society and their attempt of emancipation as Sharanas, under the leadership of Basavanna. The setting of the play is around 13th century, which is similar to that of the Bhakti

Movement. It also marked the uprisal of the Bhakti Movement in its truest sense, be it through the writings of Saint Tukaram, Kabir, Rama Prasad and so on. Their adherence to religion is key in order to relate the same to this play. All the saints that have been referred to are not from the elite sections, but are instead from the downtrodden sections of society. They have the first-hand experience of exploitation and discrimination and hence tried to perceive the almighty as per their own terms, as source of life force and justice (de Bary 350). The personalities involved with this movement tried to propagate that the view of the elites can be challenged and the weaker sections can organize themselves as a whole and see the divine entity as one, free of all forms of restrictive influences and transgressing all unjustified discriminations and exploitations.

The same is found in the ideology of Basavanna, the leader of the Sharanas in *Tale-Danda*. He tried to organize Sharanas as a powerful organization, in order for them to seek recognition in the society. He affirms the same by saying, "No one is on his own. The Lord has tied us to one another with bonds beyond our comprehension" (*Tale-Danda* 32). They are against all conventional forms of worship and sees Shiva as endearing and benevolent for all and not for selective masses. Basavanna and his followers challenged the conventional ways of worship – rejecting idolatry and strived to create equality amongst the unequal, which brought them into conflict with the Brahmanical sect in the play. The class inequality gets revealed in the episode where Mallibomma, a lower caste person tried to enter the house of Jagadeva, a Brahmin. The way caste is perceived gets reflected by Mallibomma as he says, "Don't be silly. I shouldn't have even stepped into this Brahmin Street. And you want me to come into your house? No, thank you" (*Tale-Danda* 3).

The idea of Bhakti Movement is to reduce discrimination, which is a major issue within the Hindu community. The elite Hindus have in some way or the other abused their power to keep the sections like Harijans/Dalits under their control and determine the way of their living. In Foucauldian terms, it is the people in power who determine the knowledge system. Ambedkar gave one such instance where he talked about a village in Zanu, Gujarat where the use of metal pots by untouchables for carrying water caused them to get assaulted by the upper-class Hindus (Ambedkar 12). This can also be explained through the use of the *varna* system- where one's birth determined the occupation that he would follow for the rest of his life. The divisions are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras (Ambedkar 25). The divisions are rigid and do not offer the scope of mobility. This provided them the basis to establish

their control over the minority – stripping them of their basic rights be it visiting temples, public places and so on.

This becomes the focal point of debate of B. R. Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste*. With this debate, he tries to expose the shortcomings of the caste, *varna* system and the pitfalls existing within Hindu religious system. In his speech for the conference organized by Jat-Pat-Todak-Mandal, he was asked to present forth his views on caste system and how they need to strengthen their place in society. But in order to establish so, he targets Hinduism as well. He did receive criticisms for this outlook but he tried to give a logical explanation to the same. In his defence, he pointed out the differences and issues within Hinduism – as to how its scriptures and understandings were restricted to a certain group of people, who acted as gatekeepers of knowledge (Ambedkar 31). The aspect of birth gave them a privilege of power and they stripped the people of lower birth of their basic rights. A person who is a part of a higher *varna* is likely to be reluctant to usher in changes in society, thereby not abiding by the role of an intellectual (Ambedkar 32).

All these arguments paved way for Ambedkar's activities, interests for provision of rights for the downtrodden sections of society through electoral reforms. He laid down provisions for the creation of reservation under two umbrella terms: Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. He even entered into a debate with M. K. Gandhi, regarding his tirade against Hinduism. Gandhiji tried to counter Ambedkar's claims by justifying his beliefs regarding Harijan – being children of God. He did respect the untouchables, but was not willing to dismantle the *varna* system yet, as it had divine support. He even gave the examples of prominent leaders, who emerged from the Hindu community, yet worked for the upliftment of the backward classes. He even questioned the scriptures used by Ambedkar for his argument against Hinduism (Ambedkar 42).

But Gandhiji's opposition did not adequately answer the issues of casteism in the country. Several groups started to emerge later on in 80s-90s in India, be it the groups in Karnataka or the Dalit Panthers Group in Maharashtra. They were greatly inspired by the debate of Gandhi-Ambedkar and sort to reorganize their position in the society through political upheavals, gatherings and so on. The Dalit Panthers Conference encouraged the production of literature, documenting their "lived experiences", their oppression and exploitation at the hands of the upper-class people (Satyanarayana and Tharu 13). Later on, the literature produced by the writers got added to the academia as well, from the 1990s, creating awareness amongst others

regarding their stories and their position as a community in the society. All these can be termed as means of challenging the power structure at the centre and foreground the stories from the margin.

These events played an important role in the creation of reservation systems for the disadvantaged classes – be it in legislature, executive and in jobs (Chopra 33). Ambedkar had a vision that this system of reservation would provide upliftment for the backward castes and if implemented for a period of up to 10 years, the equality among all classes could be established. However, due to the deep-rooted corruption – be it the financial gains or vote bank politics exercised by the ruling parties to keep themselves in power, the reservation system was not done away with, and instead, further reservations for various groups were added on as time progressed. All of these developments led to the creation of the resentment feelings not only within the privileged Hindus, but also within the non- Hindus as well.

In the context of the play *Tale-Danda*, it was written in the background of the Mandal Commission Reports, where reservation of seats was announced for the OBCs. The Mandal Commission's decision of providing additional reservation for the OBC fuelled anger amidst the people of Unreserved classes (Chopra 34). They perceived it as a threat to their own positions and due to the inbuilt corruptions and failure of respective governments to secure jobs for all. Hence, when the final verdict was passed regarding the reservation, widespread violence emerged. The violence was not only against corruption, but also it opposed the growth of importance of the deprived classes creating fear in society that OBCs would take up their place someday in the society with the help of such policies.

This is connected to the text. The Sharanas were a force to reckon with in the kingdom. They played a central part in maintaining the economic progress of the state, which the ruler realized. King Bijjala himself admitted by saying, "Even those who despise the Sharanas for their beliefs need them for their economic enterprise- as indeed I do- and so they pour money into …. coffers" (*Tale-Danda* 24).

The aspect of reservation becomes key in understanding of the text as caste acts as a stigma for this section of society. Reservation enables them to gain a foothold in the mainstream of society, else they would have been kept restricted in the margins for their entire lifetime. Irrespective of their progress in socio-political and economical arenas, the upper class would remind them from time to time about their birth and parentage. This can be seen in the case of the ruler as well. He is in a position of authority, yet he is well aware of his cobbler lineage and hence is seen

in an eye of mistrust amongst others, which prompts him to keep an ally with the Sharanas for his benefit (*Tale-Danda* 14). Thus, the play acts as a mirror to the struggles of the untouchables to rise to prominence in the society and make themselves a powerful entity and important enough to be taken seriously by the upper-class society.

Basavanna, amidst all the issues had established himself as a name of reverence in the kingdom. However, the position of the Sharanas came into jeopardy when an alliance was attempted between the son of Haralayya, a cobbler with Madhuvarsha's daughter, who was from the upper-class Brahmin family – both of whom were disciples of Basavanna. Although his motto, endeavour and his struggles were to ensure equality for his fellow community members, he could not wholeheartedly support this union, fearing backlash from the Brahmins. This doubt on the union in Basavanna's mind brought into question the relevance of the changes he was trying to bring in as his hesitance challenged the very aspect of equality he was working upon, causing the disillusionment on behalf of his followers. He rightly says, "The orthodox will see this mingling of castes as a blow at the very roots of varnashrama dharma" (*Tale-Danda* 38).

For the upper caste, this marriage would be an abomination and a possible attack on their stature in the society (Islam 60). The act of the intermarriage between the elite and the outcastes sparked the violence in the state- similar to the ones caused by the Mandal Commission reports. This act of marriage was an act of transgressing the *varna* system, which was also reflected in the act of reservations- the act of challenging the social order and establish themselves equal to that of the elites.

The act of transgression in *Tale-Danda* also did not end well. This violence, riots in the state regarding the marriage, was led by King Bijjalipura's son Sovideva (Islam 61). This mirrors the aftermaths of the Mandal Commission verdict, where reservations for the downtrodden classes sparked massive uprisings across the country by the unreserved classes. The elites being in majority fought back and thwarted further attempts of digressing the social order. This killed the resistance and brought back the old order into play. Eventually in the play, the Hindus regained supremacy over the Sharanas.

Tughlaq and Nehruvian Era

Tughlaq, one of the most staged and critically acclaimed plays of Karnad, takes us to the reign of the Delhi Sultan, Muhammad bin Tughlaq, better known as Tughlaq

the whimsical for his controversial administrative decisions. The character, Sultan Muhammad in the play *Tughlaq* represents the historical figure with his characteristics, whims and fancies. It can also be inferred that Karnad used this historical period as a tacit reference to Nehruvian Era. This work can be interpreted through the Historiographic lens with the help of the texts written by Maulana Azad and others which documented the Independence Struggle and the aftermaths of the formation of the Nation.

Muhammad bin Tughlaq in the play has been shown as someone who is idealistic in nature and is willing to step out of conventional way of thinking. Tughlaq was very well aware of the words of philosophers and used the analogy of chess to solve most of his complex problems as reflected in this dialogue of Muhammad, "I have just solved the most famous problem in chess. Even al-Adli and as-Saraki said it was insoluble." (*Tughlaq* 9). Tughlaq's goals were far sighted in nature. This gets reflected his decision of abolishing jizya tax – in order to foster a community feeling between Hindus and Muslims. A bonding between two ideologically different communities would help his kingdom in the long run.

His decision of shifting his capital to Daulatabad, Maharashtra was taken with the aim to nullify the dominance of Hindus in order to usher in secularism (Subhalaxmi 12). Earlier, the capital was near the borders, which caused the capital city to be under the constant threat of an attack from the neighbouring kingdoms. By shifting the capital, he attempted to secure the capital and tries to pacify the crowd by telling them that the move would strengthen the Hindu- Muslim bond in his kingdom (*Tughlaq* 4). His plan of introducing copper coins, in place of silver coins was to ensure equal distribution of wealth for all. He got to know about paper currency from China, showing his global outlook (*Tughlaq* 39).

Jawaharlal Nehru, as an administrator had certain logic behind his actions. He was a scholar and was aware of the surroundings and socio-political conditions of the country. Accordingly, he did try to take some measures as the then Prime Minister for the betterment of the country, including educational, agricultural, economic policies (Das 379). However, both Tughlaq and Nehru failed in their attempts of ushering in changes which they had dreamt of. They lacked awareness of the surroundings at times and the aftermaths that an action taken up by them might cause in the long run.

A lot of their policies did not produce the desired effect because of lack of proper planning and implementation. Be it Tughlaq or Pandit Nehru, they did lack

support of the people, as they were not much clear about their way of action. Nehru, as per the claims of Durga Das, could not gather much support amongst the foot soldiers of the Congress Party, hence he was not able to gather mass popularity. Durga Das states that "he had little communication with ordinary Congressmen or with the people. In general, too, his contact with his Cabinet colleagues did not extend beyond official routine" (Das 383).

In the play, Tughlaq's decisions were not taken in consideration with the ground level scenario around him. The abolishing of the Jizya Tax for the Hindus by Tughlaq caused him to be seen with a sense of suspicion by the Muslim community. Before pushing for Hindu- Muslim brotherhood, he did not try to make his Hindu subjects fall in line with his way of thinking. He could not instil confidence within the people that he aimed for equality and one-sided upliftment raised suspicion within the Muslims, as they were in the majority. There was also a lack of communication from his end to the public and he made no efforts to clear the doubts of his subjects regarding his image, backgrounds as well as about his policies.

Due to his shrewd way of thinking, he made enemies within and outside his kingdom. He ensured to finish off all his enemies in the most gruesome manner as possible, be it Ain-ul-Mulk, Sheikh Imam-ud-din or Shihab-ud-din. He even involved a great deal of thinking towards keeping his enemies under his control, as revealed by him during his conversation with Barani and Najib. He acted cunningly to remove Sheikh Imam-ud-din from his path and got Shihab-ud-din killed on account of treachery. He suffered further for his ways of dissenting opposition – emerging from the fact that he stopped the general public from visiting his debate with Imam-ud-din, which was revealed by Sheikh Shams-ud-din to Shihab-ud-din: "his soldiers were hiding in the streets around stopping those who tried to come..." (*Tughlaq* 33).

He lacked trustworthy people around him who would paint a good image of him to the people and strictly followed a panoptical way of looking at people, atop a tower and not from the grassroot level. He trusted only a handful of his ministers – Barani and Najib. He followed Najib mainly, who was merely a 'yes-sir' person in nature. He did not actually pay heed to the solid advices given by Barani as it went against his way of thinking. Tughlaq did what he felt was the best thing to be done, falling prey to his impulses. He lacked people with expertise in his kingdom upon whom he could count upon and the one he had; he did not pay heed to him. If he had not done that, he would have had second thoughts behind the hasty shifting of his

capital as well as introduction of copper coins. People had their livelihood, home well settled for years and a shift of capital needed gradual planning and phase wise relocation. But his sudden decision came as a huge blow for the people. They had to let go off a settled life and depart for a new place with no assurance of food, shelter and money. It is practically impossible for any ruler to provide ration for a continuous basis to its subject, especially at a time when the state itself is lacking a machinery to boost its economy.

Moreover, the intention behind introducing copper coins was noble, but he perhaps failed to take into account that the copper is cheap in nature and can be easily counterfeited (Subhalaxmi 14). Counterfeit copper coins ended up spreading in the market, devaluing the original ones, causing severe impact to the kingdom. Muhammad's Step-mother stated that "there are five hundred carts out there and they are all full of counterfeit coins" which showed the hollowness of Muhammad's polices (*Tughlaq* 63). He lost his popularity due to his acts and ill-timed plans of development. His lack of awareness of the society allowed people like Aziz to exploit his policies and benefit from the same, as evident from how he won a fake case against the king or the way he counterfeited copper coins, indicating the presence of widespread corruption in the state.

Nehru, too did similar kind of mistakes, which became crucial in setting the future course of our country. Failure of Nehru's works caused disillusionment amongst the masses, especially the middle-class sections of society. He often said things which came impulsively to him, without bothering much about its consequences. His major blunder (in pre-partition India) as one of the leaders of the Indian National Congress came amidst the Cabinet Mission Plan. At that point of time (1930s), Muslim League was rising as a force of opposition to Congress and the influence of the British was waning, owing to the World Wars and the increased political activities for freedom. Calls started to emerge in demand of a separate homeland for the Muslim majority, especially by Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The Cabinet Mission Plan initially came as a relief to the Congress and several suggestions were provided by Maulana Azad – the most important among them being the provision of representative legislature for the minorities in the government along with the host of other facilities. This was enough for the Muslim League members to rest aside their doubts and form the Government along with Congress. They had almost secured the deal until Nehru made an unnecessary statement regarding this mission, saying that it may not be necessary that all the provisions would be adhered to in the near future and modifications may come up (Azad 133).

In any other time, this statement might not have been dangerous, but the situation at that time was quite volatile in nature. This again led the Muslim League leaders doubt the integrity of Congress and hence led them reinitiate the demand of a separate land, which could not be prevented any further. Nehru again went against the words of Azad and accepted the demand of separation of power, prepared by Lord Mountbatten. Azad had tried to warn him regarding the consequences but perhaps he was too much frustrated by the turn of events and communal divide, compounded by the difference between Congress and Muslim League regarding the functioning of Interim Government. This action of his mirrored Tughlaq's antics of going against important and sensible advices provided by Barani.

Corruption, personal vendetta too existed in India and perhaps Nehru could not find himself a suitable ally who would be able to think on his terms and support his way of actions. Moreover, some of the decisions he took after he became the Prime Minister of India showed his lack of far-sightedness. He took those decisions for a noble-cause, but as per the observations of Durga Das, the plans came up short when they came face to face in reality. Durga Das quotes Walt Rustow, "He made the Congress take the responsibility for running the Government. He directed the people's attention to the domestic economy and the need for development. But his manner of doing it was not successful" (Das 380).

His Panchsheel arrangement – regarding industry, agrarian policies were developed with positive intentions of rejuvenating the development of the nation. However, they were proving to be insufficient, keeping in mind of the population migration and the mess of the socio-economic conditions created due to Partition. He could not carve out an amicable way to accommodate the princely states in the newly formed India – the acquisition process involved violence and forced agreement, which became evident in the issue of Kashmir. Kashmir's problem was critical because of its desire of staying independent and its king showing allegiance to another nation. Eventually, Kashmir became a part of India but it still remains a bone of contention for India for its extremist nature and frequent cross border skirmishes. Durga Das represents the view of an ICS officer who had worked with Nehru that "His failure to accept the report of the States Reorganisation Commission caused the failure of his campaign for integration" (Das 381). He could not come up with a language plan to tie up the nation by a common thread and states had to be divided on linguistic grounds (Das 330).

However, his major blunder, also called the Himalayan Blunder came up in the 1960s, regarding Border issues with China. His overdependence on Peking's Maps gave him a false idea that China was not looking into acquiring any territory in India, which did not happen. Nehru did not invest much into strengthening the army at the borders, especially near China. The government failed in having a proper understanding with the neighbouring nation and it was complicated by the equation which India shared with Tibet. Eventually, China with all these diplomatic issues, proceeded to attack India and the Indian Counterparts fared badly in the Indo-Sino War and had to concede a territory to China, which is now known as Aksai Chin (Das 360).

Nehru, in particular did show his resentful side at times while showing his opposition to a person. In this case, Sardar Patel had to bear the brunt. He did not shy away from publicly expressing his dislike of Patel, going to the extent of not attending his funeral while in power. Later on, he did develop differences with Maulana Azad as well (Das 377). Probably both Tughlaq and Nehru were steadfast in their opinions and took decisions on basis of their instincts. Their actions did have noble intentions, but they were mostly done in haste and somehow, both of them did lay much emphasis on emotions rather than logicality on most occasions, which Maulana Azad confirm in case of Panditji: "I have nevertheless to say with regret that he is at times apt to be carried away by his feelings" (Azad 137).

For Tughlaq as well, it reflects from the fact he straight away decided to provide death sentence for her step-mother and then regretted later on. Both of Nehru and Tughlaq seemed to suffer from a saviour complex. They considered the fact that their actions were necessary in the purview of saving the nation and its people from trouble and their actions would benefit the public in the long run. It was unfortunate that the very public resented their actions and both of them in a way failed to gauge the public expectations regard them.

Conclusion

In this paper, a discussion was attempted on representation on contemporary politics in the times of Girish Karnad with the help of his plays *Tughlaq* and *Tale-Danda*. The plays were analysed with the help of the tool of New Historicism. Non-literary text was taken into consideration, like Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste*, Maulana Azad's *India Wins Freedom* and Durga Das's *India from Curzon to Nehru and After* in order to bring forth the socio-political conditions into the foreground around which the texts of Karnad were written and derive a co-relation between the texts

and society at that point of time. A background discussion on the context of writings of Girish Karnad was attempted as to what influenced his writings, how his socio-political dramas bore a reflection of the social changes and the angst of the youth, their existential crisis coupled with the failure of government, resulting in catastrophes.

In the due course of discussions, an attempt was made to analyse the aspect of political criticisms in the plays. In *Tale-Danda*, the issue of power politics in terms of caste was discussed, keeping in mind of actions of Basavanna and how the caste-based violence mirrored the fallout of Mandal Commission reports and the play shows how deeply the people have internalized the regressive socio-cultural practices and how difficult it is to break out of the same. The ideology of Basavanna was related to the criticism of caste politics by Ambedkar in his address of *Annihilation of Caste*, as to why Hinduism is restricted and how it dominates the lower-caste community, forming the basis of reservation and creation of Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The play also reflects the deep-rooted caste-based division in the minds of the people and the gap between these two groups which cannot be bridged at all.

In *Tughlaq*, an attempt was made to mirror the actions and ambition of Tughlaq to Nehru and the shortcomings of their ideas were discussed and also it was observed how corruption created a hindrance in the proper execution of their ideas. Their roles as a saviour are questionable and the fact came up that they lacked the ability to set up sustainable long-term goals because of a clouded sense of reason. Karnad, highlighted the existential crisis of the generation by using the character of Tughlaq, which in turn was influenced from Nehru.

In order to conclude, it can be said that an artist does not create a literary text with any conscious effort to implement any theory; it is the task of the critic to analyse his/her texts through the tools of literary theories. History and social changes are naturally reflected in the creation of an artist. The intention of the present work is to analyse Karnad's texts and interpret them through new historicism.

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