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Bherulal Patidar Govt. P. G. College, MHOW
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VALUE-ADDED / ADD-ON COURSE
DESIGNED BY DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
The Impact of Bhartiya gyan Parampara on English Literature
MODULE -05
DRAMA

1.0 Introduction

Welcome to the fascinating world of drama! In this module, we will explore how the rich mosaic of Indian philosophy, religion, and culture has influenced dramatic works both in India and the West. We'll investigate plays that showcase the interplay between Eastern thought and Western theatrical traditions, examining how playwrights have woven complex themes of identity, spirituality, and human nature into their works. From the absurdist landscapes of Harold Pinter to the mythological reinterpretations of Girish Karnad, this journey will reveal the profound impact of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara (Indian Knowledge Tradition) on the art of drama.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- ❖ Analyze the influence of Indian philosophy and religion on selected dramatic works.
- ❖ Compare and contrast Eastern and Western approaches to theatrical themes and techniques.
- ❖ Evaluate the use of Indian mythological elements in modern drama.
- ❖ Discuss the relevance of ancient Indian concepts in contemporary theatrical contexts.

- ❖ Interpret dramatic symbolism rooted in Indian cultural traditions.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this module, learners will:

- ❖ Demonstrate a critical understanding of how Indian philosophical concepts are integrated into dramatic works.
- ❖ Articulate the ways in which playwrights have adapted Indian myths and legends for the modern stage.
- ❖ Apply knowledge of Indian cultural elements to analyze character motivations and plot structures in selected plays.
- ❖ Recognize and explain the significance of Indian spiritual concepts in Western theatrical productions.
- ❖ Develop an appreciation for the cross-cultural exchange of ideas in dramatic literature.

Reference to Prior Learning

This module builds upon your existing knowledge of dramatic forms, literary analysis, and world cultures. Your previous studies in literature and theater will provide a foundation for understanding the structural elements of drama. Additionally, any prior exposure to Indian philosophy, mythology, or religious studies will enhance your ability to recognize and interpret the cultural references within these plays. As we explore these works, we'll draw connections to universal themes you've encountered in other literary forms, while introducing you to the unique ways in which drama incorporates Indian thought and tradition.

Drama: From Indian Roots to Global Influence

Drama is the one of the most complex of art forms, next only to the film. We can look upon drama purely as a literary work or as a work of performing art. There is a tradition of poetics which forms a part of literary criticism. There is also a tradition of drama criticism which treats theatre as a performing art and which is no less a developed field of study. Thus, the ways of looking upon drama have been institutionalized. It is interesting to note that both these ways of looking upon drama as a part of practical criticism existed in ancient India. Performative aspect of drama (natya) could be understood in the light of Bharata's Natyashastra. Bharat was more interested in the performance of drama, rather than literary form. Bharat, took interest in the performance of a dramatic work right from the construction of a playhouse to the actual staging of the dramatic spectacle. He was mainly interested in giving detailed instructions to directors and actors to work together for a dramatic performance. Indian theater is a rich cultural landmark that is renowned across the globe. Bharata Muni, the founding father of Indian drama, is known for his crucial treatise on theatre, the Natya Shastra, which describes two main genres of plays: Natakas and Prakarana. Natakas concerns gods, kings, and mythology, while Prakarana focuses more on the average person's life. All plays were considered to have Rasa, the essence of art. During the classical period, plays were typically written in Sanskrit. A famous playwright of the classical period is Kalidasa, but Bhasa is the oldest Sanskrit dramatist to provide complete plays. During the traditional period, plays were improvised and presented orally rather than scripted. The modern period saw the rise of the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) and the popularity of the proscenium stage.

Indian religion and culture have significantly influenced Western dramas, particularly in the 20th century.

Playwrights like Samuel Beckett and Eugène Ionesco explored themes of uncertainty, absurdity, and the human condition. Theatre of the Absurd is influenced by Indian mythology and philosophy. Playwrights like Harold Pinter and Tom Stoppard incorporated elements of Indian thought into their works. Antonin Artaud, a French playwright, was heavily influenced by Indian and Balinese theatre. He incorporated elements of Indian mythology and philosophy into his works. Peter Brook, a British theater director, was influenced by Indian classical theatre and philosophy. His productions often incorporated elements of Indian thought and aesthetics.

Indian concepts like the "Atman" (self) and "Dharma" (duty) have influenced character development in Western dramas. Playwrights like Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller explored

themes of identity and moral responsibility. Indian epic stories like the Mahabharata and Ramayana have influenced plot structures in Western dramas.

Drama 01 - *The Caretaker* by Harold Pinter

The Caretaker is a drama in three acts by Harold Pinter. Although it was the sixth of his major works for stage and television, this psychological study of the confluence of power, allegiance, innocence, and corruption among two brothers and a tramp, became Pinter's first significant commercial success. *The Caretaker* is a drama of mixed modes; both tragic and comic, it is a tragicomedy.

The drama *The Caretaker* (1960) explores themes and elements influenced by Indian philosophy and religion. Pinter's work reflects the absurdity and uncertainty of human existence, echoing concepts found in Hindu and Buddhist philosophies. The play's exploration of power struggles and exploitation resonates with the Hindu concept of "Maya" (illusion), where individuals perceive reality through distorted lenses. The characters' blurred identities and self-deceptions mirror the Hindu idea of "Ahamkara" (ego), which obscures true self-awareness. The caretaker's manipulation and exploitation of others reflect the Buddhist concept of "Upadana" (attachment), leading to suffering. The play's ambiguous ending and unclear character motivations evoke the Hindu concept of "Dvaita" (dualism), highlighting the complexity of human nature.

Pinter's exploration of the illusory nature of reality and the fragmented self reflects Advaita Vedanta's non-dualistic philosophy. The play's themes of attachment, suffering, and the impermanence of relationships resonate with Buddhist teachings.

The caretaker's character, with his manipulative nature and multiple identities, echoes the Hindu mythological figure of the "Trickster" (e.g., Krishna's various avatars).

The setting of the drama is a run-down, cluttered room in a London house, belonging to Mick and Aston, two brothers.

The plot is woven around Aston, a quiet and introspective young man, has invited Davies, a tramp, to stay in the room. Mick, the dominant and manipulative older brother, returns home and begins to exert control over Davies and Aston.

Davies, struggling to find his place, becomes a pawn in the brothers' power games. Mick offers Davies a job as caretaker, but Davies' attempts to assert himself are thwarted by Mick's manipulation.

Aston's attempts to connect with Davies are also frustrated by Mick's interference. As tensions rise, the characters' true intentions and identities become increasingly ambiguous. The play ends with Davies, defeated and humiliated, being forced out of the house, leaving Aston and Mick's relationship more strained than ever.

- **Setting:** A run-down, cluttered room in a London house, belonging to Mick and Aston, two brothers.

- **Plot:**

Aston, a quiet and introspective young man, has invited Davies, a tramp, to stay in the room. Mick, the dominant and manipulative older brother, returns home and begins to exert control over Davies and Aston. Davies, struggling to find his place, becomes a pawn in the brothers' power games. Mick offers Davies a job as caretaker, but Davies' attempts to assert himself are thwarted by Mick's manipulation. Aston's attempts to connect with Davies are also frustrated by Mick's interference. As tensions rise, the characters' true intentions and identities become increasingly ambiguous. The play ends with Davies, defeated and humiliated, being forced out of the house, leaving Aston and Mick's relationship more strained than ever.

The main characters in Harold Pinter's play *The Caretaker*:

1. Mackenzie (Mick): The caretaker of the property, a dominant and manipulative figure who controls the environment and the other characters.
2. Aston: The younger brother, a quiet and introspective character who is often the target of Mick's manipulation.
3. Old Davies: A tramp who is taken in by Aston and becomes the focus of Mick's exploitation.

Other minor characters are:

1. Father: The father of Mick and Aston, mentioned in conversations but never appears.
2. Curley: A friend of Mick's, mentioned as someone who might visit.

Character dynamics:

1. Mick and Aston: Brothers with a complex, often tense relationship.
2. Mick and Davies: Mick manipulates and exploits Davies.
3. Aston and Davies: Aston shows kindness and sympathy towards Davies, but also becomes frustrated with him.

These characters and their relationships drive the play's exploration of power dynamics, identity, and human relationships.

Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* explores several major themes:

1. Power Dynamics: Manipulation, control, and exploitation between characters.
2. Identity: Characters' struggles to define themselves, their relationships, and their places in the world.
3. Reality and Illusion: Blurred lines between reality and fantasy, echoing Hindu concept of Maya.
4. Human Isolation: Emotional distances and disconnections among characters.
5. Uncertainty and Ambiguity: Open-ended ending, unclear motivations, and ambiguous characters.
6. Class and Social Status: Tensions between working-class characters and the affluent.
7. Vulnerability and Exploitation: Davies' vulnerability exploited by Mick.
8. Language and Communication: Misunderstandings, silences, and the power of language.
9. Existentialism and Absurdism: Meaninglessness, uncertainty, and the absurdity of human existence.
10. Psychological Complexity: Characters' inner struggles, neuroses, and psychological games.

These themes create a complex, thought-provoking drama that challenges audiences to interpret and reflect on the human condition.

Here's an example of dialogue from *The Caretaker* that reflects Indian philosophical influences:

Mick: "You're just a doddering old fool, Davies. You don't know what's good for you. I'm telling you, it's for your own good."

Davies: "I don't want to be told what's good for me. I can think for myself."

Mick: "Think? You can't think. You're just a vegetable. You're just a lump of flesh."

This dialogue echoes the Hindu concept of "Maya" (illusion), where individuals perceive reality through distorted lenses. Mick's manipulation and Davies' confusion reflect the idea that our perceptions can be misleading.

Another example:

Aston: "I've got a lot of things to think about. I've got to sort myself out."

Mick: "What's to sort out? You're just a mess. You're just a bloody mess."

This dialogue resonates with the Buddhist concept of "Dukkha" (suffering), highlighting the characters' struggles with their own thoughts and emotions.

Pinter's characteristic absurdist and existentialist style woven with pauses, silences, and understatement create tension and uncertainty. Dialogue is often fragmented, ambiguous, and open to interpretation.

The Caretaker is a thought-provoking play that explores the human condition through themes of power, identity, and relationships. The language and plot of *The Caretaker* blends Realism with the Theatre of the Absurd. In the Theatre of the Absurd language is used in a manner that heightens the audience's awareness of the language itself, often through repetition and circumventing dialogue.

Pinter's unique style creates a sense of uncertainty, leaving audiences to interpret the characters' motivations and the play's meaning.

Self-Assessment

1. Discuss major themes and writing style of Pinter in *The Caretaker*?
2. Trace influence of Indian religion and philosophy in *The Caretaker*?

Drama 02 - *The Family Reunion* by T.S.Eliot

Thomas Stearns Eliot (26 September 1888 – 4 January 1965) was a poet, essayist and playwright. He is considered to be one of the 20th century's greatest poets, as well as a central figure in English-language Modernist poetry. His use of language, writing style, and verse structure reinvigorated English poetry. He is also noted for his critical essays, which often re-evaluated long-held cultural beliefs.

The Family Reunion is a play by T. S. Eliot. Written mostly in blank verse (though not iambic pentameter), it incorporates elements from Greek drama and mid-twentieth-century detective plays to portray the hero's journey from guilt to redemption. The play was unsuccessful when first presented in 1939, and was later regarded as unsatisfactory by its author, but has been successfully revived since the 1940s.

The Family Reunion showcases Eliot's fascination with Indian religions, philosophy, and culture, demonstrating the profound impact of Eastern thought on Western literature. This drama

is heavily influenced by the concept of "Agamemnon's sin" that mirrors the Hindu idea of karma and ancestral debt. The character of Harry, Lord Monchensey, represents the struggle for self-realization, echoing the Upanishadic concept of Atman. The play's exploration of time and memory reflects Indian philosophical ideas on the cyclical nature of time. The play explores the idea of ancestral debt and guilt, reflecting Hindu concepts of karma. Characters struggle with duty and moral order, echoing Indian philosophical idea of Dharma. Harry's journey represents Moksha or the search for liberation and self-realization. Advaita Vedanta or Non-dualistic philosophy influences find expression in *The Family Reunion* as an exploration of the Self.

Hindu Mythology is reflected in the characters of Harry who is compared to Indra, symbolizing guilt and responsibility. Lady Monchensey's character draws from Kali's powerful, maternal figure.

The River symbolizes spiritual rebirth and transformation. The Family Tree represents karma and ancestral debt. The Family Estate reflects the cycle of birth, growth, and decay. Indian cultural referred Indian Art and Architecture are represented as allusions to temple sculptures and Indian design. Influences from the Mahabharata and Bhagavad Gita. Buddhist ideas such as Dukkha. The play explores suffering and impermanence. Amy's character represents detachment and awareness.

Harry: Represents the struggle for self-realization, echoing Indian philosophical ideas.

Lady Monchensey: Embodies Indian mythology's powerful female figures.

Amy: Symbolizes mindfulness and detachment, reflecting Buddhist ideas.

These Indian influences enrich the play's themes, symbolism, and character development, demonstrating Eliot's fascination with Eastern thought. The use of imagery and symbolism, such as the "family tree" and "river," draws from Indian mythology and cultural motifs.

The play is in two acts, set in Wishwood, a stately home in the north of England. At the beginning, the family of Amy, Dowager Lady Monchensey are assembling for her birthday party. She is, as her doctor later explains, clinging on to life by sheer willpower:

.....*I keep Wishwood alive*

To keep the family alive, to keep them together,

To keep me alive, and I keep them.

Lady Monchensey's two brothers-in-law and three sisters are present, and a younger relation, Mary, but none of Lady Monchensey's three sons. Among other things they discuss the sudden,

and not to them wholly unwelcome, death at sea of the wife of the eldest son Harry, the present Lord Monchensey. Neither of the younger sons ever appears, both being slightly injured in motoring accidents, but Harry soon arrives, his first appearance at Wishwood for eight years. He is haunted by the belief that he pushed his wife off the ship. In fact Harry has an alibi for the time, but whether he killed her or not he wished her dead and his feelings of guilt are the driving force in the rest of the play. Lady Monchensey decides that Harry's state warrants the discreet observation of the family doctor, who is invited to join the party, ostensibly as a dinner guest. Mary, who has been earmarked by Amy as a future wife for Harry, wishes to escape from life at Wishwood, but her aunt Agatha tells her that she must wait:

.....*You and I, Mary*

Are only watchers and waiters, not the easiest role,

Agatha reveals to Harry that his father attempted to kill Amy while Harry was in her womb, and that Agatha prevented him. Far from being grateful, Amy resented and still resents Agatha's depriving her of her husband. Harry, with Agatha's encouragement, announces his intention to go away from Wishwood, leaving his steady younger brother John to take over. Amy, despairing at Harry's renunciation of Wishwood, dies (offstage), "An old woman alone in a damned house", and Harry and his faithful servant, Downing, leave.

Here are the major characters in T.S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion*.

Main Characters: Harry, Lord Monchensey: The protagonist, a young nobleman struggling with guilt and responsibility.

- Lady Monchensey: Harry's mother, a powerful, dominating figure with a complex past.
- Amy: Lady Monchensey's sister, a wise, detached, and compassionate presence.

- Family Members:

Gerald Monchensey: Harry's uncle, a cynical, worldly figure.

Vicky: Harry's cousin, a lively, flirtatious young woman.

Charles: Harry's cousin, a dull, conventional young man.

Irene: Harry's aunt, a bitter, unhappy woman.

- Servants:

Downing: The family's loyal butler.

Winifred: A maid who provides comic relief.

Supernatural Figures:

- The Eumenides (also known as the Furies): Three ghostly figures representing Harry's guilt and ancestral debt.
- The Unseen Presence: A mysterious, divine presence guiding Harry towards self-realization.
- Harry: Symbolizes the struggle for self-realization, guilt, and responsibility.
- Lady Monchensey: Embodies the complexities of motherhood, power, and the past.
- Amy: Represents wisdom, detachment, and compassion.
- Gerald: Exemplifies cynicism and worldliness.
- Vicky: Represents youth, vitality, and frivolity.

Symbols like the family tree, the family estate, the river, the eumenides represent themes such as guilt and responsibility, family dynamics, self-realization, ancestral debt and spiritual rebirth. The themes of sin, expiation, and death are evident throughout the play. Each character in the play goes through a purgatory experience to overcome guilt through suffering. These characters drive the play's exploration of themes, symbolism, and Indian philosophical influences. The diction is mostly connotations that the characters use to express themselves. Thus, the characters rely on descriptive and figurative imagery to relate to their feelings and emotional states. The story is narrated from a third-person limited point of view which leads the reader to an objective form of understanding of the character's words and actions rather than thoughts.

T.S.Eliot's use of Indian mythology and philosophy adds depth and universality to the drama *The Family Reunion* making it a remarkable interest in Indian religions, culture and philosophy.

Self-Assessment

1. Critically examine Indian philosophy in the novel

Drama 03 - *Chandalika* by Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore born on 7, May 1861, was a popular figure in the Indian cultural renaissance. Rabindranath Tagore was a polymath poet, philosopher, musician, writer, painter and educationist. Rabindranath Tagore was the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize in 1913 for his collection of poems, *Gitanjali*. Rabindranath Tagore was called Gurudev, Kabiguru, and

Biswakabi affectionately and his songs are popularly known as Rabindrasangeet. Rabindranath Tagore penned down the national anthems of India and Bangladesh – the Jana Gana Mana and the Amar Shonar Bangla respectively are from the Rabindrasangeet. He died on 7 August 1941. “Self consciousness, up to a point, is necessary to self development; for without an awareness of the dignity of one’s own role or function, one cannot give one’s best to the world”.

The above, are the lines from one of the most underrated dramas of Rabindranath Tagore, in the world of literature – *Chandalika*. A drama with a lots of love, compassion, over compassion, feeling of inferiority, new birth, and culmination of great teachings of Buddha. This drama has a vast history and has been portrayed over centuries as a musical drama, music to give more life to it, and make the audience understand the intensity of the emotions that the protagonists carry in themselves, during the play. The major theme is on “A religion that insults is a false religion. Everyone united to make me conform to a creed that blinds and gags. But since that day something forbids me to conform any longer. I’m afraid of nothing now.”

The story that is revealed in the plot is all about discovering new dimensions of life, as well as discovering one’s inner self. Readers also come across new experiences of life through the characters themselves, in each and every scene that is being played on. Set in an old city of Shravasti, in the then Uttar Pradesh, the story has to offers many aspects of human approaches, such as, over obsession for something can be as disastrous as gulping poison. Another aspect of the play is discovered through the act of quenching thirsty Buddhist monk, that proves to be a kind of “rebirth” for a girl who is meant to be untouchable. The presence of the mother is a cue of saying that, “one should not step out of the boundaries that are set by the religion and society for any person living on this earth.” Rebellion against the wall of system and society is another thing that is portrayed by the drama. The presence of a Buddhist monk in the play, rejuvenates it, bringing whole of a new sense to the play, teachings of Buddha, determination towards life and bringing up the best of a person, is that converts it into a multi dimensional and psychological drama of intense spiritual conflict. Finally, turning into a sort of redemption, along with self realization, the drama yet has a tale to tell, that “Love does not claim possession, but it gives freedom.”

Chandalika, as the name suggests, is about a chandal girl belonging to the lowest untouchable caste, who gives water to a beautiful monk and falls for him. Unable to restrain herself, she made her mother chant the spells and bound him to be presented at their house at night. Filled with lust and sensitivity, the character of Prakriti portrays nature's qualities. She is aggressive, ready to make

sacrifices, adorably tolerant, love excessively, mostly alike our mother nature. The story is not of a wicked girl roused to lust by the physical beauty of the monk, but of a very sensitive girl, condemned by her birth to a despised caste, suddenly awakened to a consciousness of her full rights as a woman.

Anand, the famous disciple of Buddha, is a monk in a real sense, pure, loved all the creatures of the world, spread the enlightenment, and victim of the lust of a girl, who unknowingly, is put to remorse and shame. Symbolizing the social evils prevailing in the society, in the contemporary time.

Prakriti's mother, is yet another character of the play, who, unfortunately, had to pay heavy price for her daughter's love, by sacrificing every nerve and cell of her body. She is, as protective, as every other mother ever lived on this earth. At the same time, preventing her from claiming such a pure soul, Anand, as her's.

This moving play is based on a Buddhist legend about Ananda, a famous disciple of Lord Buddha. For wisdom is not happiness, and renunciation is not fulfilment. Forgotten that I was a human being, these words always pinched Prakriti's ears for many years, when one day in vaisakh, she, sitting under the blistering sun was introduced to a person in town, whom she could only think to be standing some fifty feet apart from "a girl, as she." It is, Anand, the monk, pure as heaven, beautiful, enlightened, who has renounced the earthly pleasures, approaches her to quench his thirst. But, being a Chandal, Prakriti was bound not to offer him water from a lake as impure as herself, on which he laments, and speaks to her, "if the black clouds of sravana are dubbed chandal, what of it? It doesn't change their nature, or destroy the virtue of their water. Don't humiliate yourself; self humiliation is a sin, worse than self murder." It is when comes twist in the tale comes, she is revealed to have a new birth of herself and is determined to bring him back to her, and to cherish her new birth with herself. Hearing this from Prakriti's own mouth, her mother is shaken up and thinks that somebody has chant some spell over her. She is awestruck by the idea of her talking of the humanism, caste, and want for the monk. Not ready to listen to her mother, Prakriti wants the monk back, by hook or by crook, that could be achieved when the mother chants her spell over him, and call him off straight to her place. The mother rebels and protests against this idea of her, saying, we only churn up the mud, his power is much more greater than hers, and by chanting spell over him, she can commit a great sin. The utmost desire to have the monk right next to her is unshakable, and being the only loveable daughter of her, the mother is bound to chant the magic

spells. She makes her prepare all the stuff that is required to fulfill the strength of the words, and giving her a magic mirror, tells her to be attentive of the path that Anand will choose to come over here. Magically, her spells worked out, but in a different manner, though Anand came all the way to her house, without any second thought, but his radiance withered, the shining, the purity, the heavenly glow, all gone, faded, destroyed to pieces. Also, her mother was exhausted till now, she was lying on the floor, counting last of her breath, as overpowering such a majestic personality was a difficult task to do.

It was the time when Prakriti again realized, was awakened to life, that she has committed a sin, redeemed for the second time, purged of the pride and egoism that had made her forget that love does not claim possession, but gives freedom. Also, the holy monk is taken back into his earlier state by the powers of The Buddha. The drama is a delight to the readers, a tragedy with a lot of teachings and morals to tell. The 'dancing body' became a symbol of mobility, resistance and autonomy. Through her dance movements Chandalika (her stage name being Prakriti) articulates her anger and love. Anger, against a social status imposed upon her to which she finds herself shackled for life and also of liberation, self redemption, obsession, realization, rebirth, it is a bunch of great dialogues that takes the reader into itself.

Self-Assessment

1. Critically examine the influence of Buddhism in the drama?

Drama 04 - *Yayati* by Girish Karnad

Girish Karnad was a renowned Indian actor, film director, playwright, and writer who made significant contributions to Kannada and Indian cinema. Born on May 19, 1938, in Matheran, Maharashtra. Karnad's education took him to Karnataka Arts College, Dharwad, where he earned a degree in mathematics and statistics ¹. He then pursued philosophy, politics, and economics at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. Karnad's playwright debut, *Yayati*, was published in 1961 and received instant success. His work was widely acclaimed, earning him the Jnanpith Award in

1998, India's highest literary honor. Karnad passed away on June 10, 2019, leaving behind a legacy of artistic excellence and social activism.

Yayati is a play written by Girish Karnad in 1961, based on the ancient Indian epic, the Mahabharata. The story revolves around King Yayati, who is cursed by the sage Shukracharya to suffer the consequences of old age and impotence. The curse can only be lifted if someone willingly accepts Yayati's old age and suffers on his behalf. The play is based on a story from the ancient Indian epic, the Mahabharata. The character of Yayati and the curse of Shukracharya are derived from Puranic mythology. Hindu concepts of karma and dharma can be seen through Yayati's actions and consequences reflect Hindu ideas of karma (action and consequence) and dharma (duty and moral order). The drama also explores the non-dualistic philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, highlighting the illusory nature of human desires. Yayati's experiences illustrate the Hindu concept of karma and rebirth, where actions have consequences in this life and the next. Puru's selfless act represents the pursuit of liberation (moksha) from the cycle of birth and death. The drama's exploration of the relationship between the individual self (jiva) and the ultimate reality (Brahman) reflects Dvaita Vedanta philosophy. Yayati's struggle with desire and duty echoes the Bhagavad Gita's themes of selfless action and detachment. Yayati's experiences highlight the impermanence of human life and youth. Puru's selflessness demonstrates the value of self-control and detachment. Yayati's downfall illustrates the dangers of unchecked desire and attachment. Puru's sacrifice represents the importance of selfless action and duty.

The drama is set in ancient India, during the reign of King Yayati.

Act 1: King Yayati, a just and fair ruler, is cursed by the sage Shukracharya for his infidelity. The curse makes Yayati old and frail, taking away his youth and vitality. Desperate to regain his youth, Yayati asks his five sons to exchange their youth for his old age.

Act 2: Four of Yayati's sons refuse to help him, fearing the consequences of old age. The youngest son, Puru, agrees to accept Yayati's old age and suffers on his behalf. Yayati regains his youth and vitality but realizes the emptiness of his desires.

Act 3: Yayati's reign becomes tyrannical, and his people suffer. Puru, now old and frail, realizes his sacrifice was in vain. Yayati understands the true meaning of life and the consequences of his actions. The major themes are based on the human condition as Yayati's struggle reflects human fears and desires. Desire and attachment reflected in Yayati's downfall illustrates the dangers of unchecked desire. Puru's selfless act highlights the importance of duty and sacrifice. The play

emphasizes the inevitability of aging and death. Yayati's experiences illustrate the possibility of transformation and renewal.

Characters:

1. King Yayati: The protagonist, a complex character struggling with desire and duty.
2. Puru: Yayati's youngest son, who sacrifices his youth for his father.
3. Shukracharya: The sage who curses Yayati for his infidelity.
4. Yayati's wives and sons: Representing different aspects of human nature and desire.

Yayati's struggle reflects existentialist themes of individual freedom and responsibility. Yayati's desire for youth can be seen as a manifestation of his ego and id. Karnad's adaptation of the Mahabharata highlights the relevance of ancient myths to modern society. The play critiques the societal pressure to conform to traditional norms. The play's non-linear narrative structure reflects the complexity of human experience. Karnad's use of poetic language adds depth and richness to the narrative. Yayati and Puru's complex characters invite multiple interpretations. Symbols like 'The Curse' represents the inevitability of aging and mortality. 'Youth' symbolizes vitality, energy, and desire. And 'Old Age' represents wisdom, experience, and decline. Forest symbolizes the unknown, the spiritual realm, and transformation. River represents change, flux, and purification. Snake represents transformation, renewal, and danger and moon stands for the cyclical nature of life, time, and desire. Karnad uses dramatic devices such as monologues written to reveal characters' thoughts and emotions. Dialogues are employed to explore relationships and conflicts. Soliloquies are used to highlight Yayati's inner turmoil. Karnad uses asides to provide insight into characters' thoughts. Stage directions are used to create atmosphere and evoke emotions. Karnad employs metaphors to compare and contrast ideas. Alliteration has been employed to create musicality and rhythm. Personification is used to attribute human qualities to non-humans entities. Karnad repeats key phrases and ideas to emphasize themes. Karnad's use of symbols and techniques highlights the complexities and paradoxes of human nature. By employing these symbols and writing techniques, Karnad creates a rich and complex play that explores fundamental human concerns. Critically acclaimed for its innovative storytelling and themes. Influential in Indian theater and literature. Translated into multiple languages and adapted into various forms of media. Yayati is a thought-provoking play that explores fundamental human concerns through a rich tapestry of myth, symbolism, and psychological complexity.

Self-Assessment

1. Write a critical analysis of the drama?
2. Discuss drama writing techniques Karnad has employed in writing *Yayati*

Conclusion

The exploration of drama through the lens of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara reveals the profound impact of Indian philosophy, mythology, and cultural traditions on both Eastern and Western theatrical works. From Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* to T.S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion*, Rabindranath Tagore's *Chandalika*, and Girish Karnad's *Yayati*, we see a rich tapestry of ideas drawn from Hindu, Buddhist, and Vedantic thought.

These plays demonstrate how ancient Indian concepts such as karma, dharma, maya, and moksha can be seamlessly integrated into modern dramatic narratives, adding depth and universality to the themes explored. The influence of Indian philosophy is evident in the characters' psychological struggles, the symbolic representations, and the overall structure of these works.

By studying these dramas, we gain insight into the cross-cultural exchange of ideas and the enduring relevance of Indian thought in contemporary literature. This module has highlighted the importance of understanding and appreciating the Bhartiya Gyan Parampara as a vital source of inspiration for dramatic works across cultures and time periods.

Activity

Dramatic Interpretation Workshop

Objective: To help students understand and interpret the influence of Indian philosophy in drama through performance.

Instructions:

1. Divide the class into four groups, each assigned one of the plays discussed in the module.
2. Each group should select a key scene from their assigned play that demonstrates the influence of Indian philosophy or mythology.
3. Groups will have 30 minutes to prepare a short performance (5-7 minutes) of their chosen scene.
4. After each performance, the group should lead a brief discussion explaining how they interpreted and portrayed the Indian philosophical elements in their scene.
5. The class will then provide feedback and discuss their observations of the Indian influences in each performance.

Assessment/Know Your Progress:

1. How does Harold Pinter's "The Caretaker" reflect concepts from Indian philosophy, particularly the idea of Maya (illusion)?
2. Discuss the influence of Advaita Vedanta philosophy in T.S. Eliot's "The Family Reunion."
3. Analyze the Buddhist themes present in Rabindranath Tagore's "Chandalika" and their significance to the play's message.
4. Compare and contrast the treatment of karma and dharma in Girish Karnad's "Yayati" with one of the Western plays discussed in this module.
5. How do the playwrights use symbolism derived from Indian mythology to enhance the themes of their works? Provide specific examples from at least two plays.

Glossary

Atman: The individual self or soul in Hindu philosophy

Bhartiya Gyan Parampara: Indian Knowledge Tradition

Brahman: The ultimate reality or universal soul in Hindu philosophy

Chandalika: A member of the lowest, "untouchable" caste in Indian society

Dharma: Moral duty or righteous living in Indian religions

Dukkha: Suffering or dissatisfaction in Buddhist philosophy

Dvaita: Dualism in Vedantic philosophy

Eumenides: The Furies in Greek mythology, often used symbolically in modern drama

Karma: The law of cause and effect in Indian philosophy

Maya: The illusion of the material world in Hindu philosophy

Moksha: Liberation from the cycle of rebirth in Indian religions

Natyashastra: Ancient Indian treatise on the performing arts

Prakriti: Nature or the material world in Indian philosophy

Rasa: The essence or emotional flavor of art in Indian aesthetics

Samsara: The cycle of rebirth in Indian religions

Upadana: Attachment or clinging in Buddhist philosophy

Vedanta: A school of Hindu philosophy based on the Upanishads

Yayati: A king in Hindu mythology known for his pursuit of sensual pleasures

Yoga: A spiritual discipline in Indian traditions

Zen: A school of Mahayana Buddhism emphasizing meditation and insight

Additional Sources

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