

KARNABHĀRAM BY BHĀSA AND PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY OF SIGMUND FREUD

Renuka Panchal

(Ph.D. Scholar, M.Phil., M.A. Sanskrit - Gold Medalist, JRF-NET/SET, M.A. Clinical Psychology) Contact -
9167393805

Ph.D. Student, Visiting Faculty at University of Mumbai Sanskrit Dept.

Abstract

Karnabhāram is one of Mahakavi Bhāsa's thirteen dramas, a one-act play based on Karna's mental anguish and deep psychological transactions. The various emotions in Karna's mind and their various shades are beautifully portrayed by Bhāsa. Karna's thoughts, feelings at the time of death, regrets in life, disdain from society and a mixture of such diverse emotions is seen in this tragic play. Western Neurological and psychologist Dr. Sigmund Freud is the pioneer of Psychoanalytic Theory. According to Psychoanalytic Theory there are three levels of mind - Unconscious mind, subconscious mind and conscious mind. Dr. Freud has given great importance to the unconscious mind. A man's outward behavior is a complete reflection of his unconscious mind's desires, aspirations, expectations, suppressed emotions, unfulfilled dreams, etc. That is why it is intended to study the behavior of Karna in Bhāsa's play Karnabhāram and the feelings hidden in his unconscious mind according to Psychoanalytic Theory. In this paper, the various shades of Karna's emotions, the subtle feelings in his mind, the void that filled the inside at the last moment of his life, all these have been studied from an objective and scientific point of view on the basis of Psychoanalytic Theory. Through this, the mental state of Karna in Bhāsa's Karnabhāram will be observed on the basis of Psychoanalytic Theory and the Amalgamation of Indian knowledge tradition and Western psychology will contribute to the knowledge system.

Keywords: Bhāsa, Karnabhāram, Karna, Psychoanalytic Theory, Sigmund Freud

Research Methodology

- Research Problem - To study Bhāsa's Karnabhāram In The Psychoanalytic Theory of Sigmund Freud.
- Hypothesis - Bhāsa's Karnabhāram can be objectively studied and analyzed in the light of The Psychoanalytic Theory of Sigmund Freud.
- Research Rationale - The role of Karna in Mahākavi Bhāsa's play Karnabhāram is an extraordinary mirror of the human mind. Bhāsa's style of writing is based on psychological principles. Karna's depression, regret, emotional storm, thoughts about self, self image need to be studied scientifically and objectively, so that one can know karna's psychology. The purpose of this paper is to give an objective context to the study of Karna's emotional state in Karnabhāram.
- Research Type - This is a comparative research as it is trying to build an associative value between Classical sanskrit Drama and western theory of psychoanalysis by Dr. Sigmund Freud.
- Aims and objectives -
 - [1] To study the psychology of Karna in Bhāsa's Karnabhāram in the light of Theory of psychoanalysis.
 - [2] Building an association between ancient Sanskrit Literature and western theory of psychoanalysis.
 - [3] Unfolding Bhāsa's psychological observations in a scientific and objective way.
 - [4] Using ancient literature as a case study with reference to Psychoanalytic Theory.
- Scope and limitations - This study enhances the scope for the practical application of character and personality of Karna in Bhāsa's Karnabhāram in light of the Theory of Sigmund Freud. This ancient wisdom will help us to promote psychological health and well-being. On the other hand, Bhāsa's Karnabhāram and Psychoanalytic Theory of Sigmund Freud have totally different grounds of cultural foundation. But still the structure and function of Human Mind is constant beyond the thresholds of culture and time. Thus, there will also be the critical scope for further comparative and applied study of human mind and cognitive processes in the light of ancient wisdom and philosophy

DISCUSSION

Bhāsa has enriched the repository of Sanskrit literature with gracefully successful plays. The kind of successful portrayal of human emotions that we get in Bhāsa's plays is rare elsewhere. Very subtle and fluid depiction of human nature in Bhasa's 13 plays. Along with this, you can see the accurate depiction of human emotions and

mental transaction in all his literary-works. In the present paper, an act play named Karnabhāram has been analyzed. The play presented is based on Mahabharata and describes Karna's sad state of mind on the battlefield. Psychoanalytic Role of Karna Explained by the theory of Sigmund Freud, in the present paper. Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud had made groundbreaking work in the field of unconscious study. He pioneered the psychoanalytic school in the field of the study of the human mind. According to him there are 3 parts of personality: Id, Ego and Superego. Id is a primitive and cunning part of the personality which is working with pleasure principle. It focuses on the gratification of the needs and desires. Then ego is part of personality which works through the reality principle. It always tries to show a realistic picture of the outside world and tries to create psychological defenses in order to neutralize internal conflicts and anxiety. The next part of the personality is superego. Superego is a faculty that encourages an individual to take ethical, moral and appropriate decisions. It can be defined as higher intellect or an intellectual self of the human. Also Freud discussed 3 levels of Mind: Conscious Mind, Subconscious Mind, Unconscious mind. Conscious Mind consists of all the thoughts, feelings and actions about which a person is aware about it. Conscious material includes all the memories which are in the light of awareness. Subconscious mind is the middle level of Mind that influences our thoughts, emotions, and behavior. But subconscious memories are not quickly accessible for an individual, it requires some mental triggers in order to get into the level of conscience or awareness. Last and the deepest level of Mind, according to Freud, is Unconscious mind. Unconscious mind consists of all the thoughts, emotions, desires, wants, unfulfilled dreams and wishes which are repressed by an individual. Unconscious mind contains all the repressed material about which an individual is unaware. According to Freud This unconscious mind plays a vital role in an individual's thoughts, feelings and actions. Unconscious analysis of Karna in Bhāsa's Karnabhāram can be discussed in the following manner. In the initial part of the drama, Karna tries to uncover his inner feelings to King Shalya. In that dialogue deep layers of melancholy and sadness are reflected.⁶⁴ Along with deep sadness and bereavement, lack of confidence and feelings of insecurities are there in his mind.⁶⁵ That's why is In Karnabhāram Karna's unconscious mind has a kind of pressure, a feeling of insecurity, a feeling of regret for learning by lying to Bhagwān Parshurām, a feeling of being deceived by Indra, as well as a promise to Kunti about keeping safe to her four sons. As discussed earlier, according to Dr. Sigmund Freud, Unconscious mind consists of Deeply repressed thoughts, feelings and desires. These unconscious contents trigger an individual in order to do actions in consciousness. Moreover, the unconscious mind has a vital impact on the conscious mind of an individual. In this way over inner insecurity, fear and loss of confidence can be analyzed in Karna's unconscious mind.⁶⁶ At subconscious level, Karna in Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, tries to review and recall those memories which are associated with his current state of mind. In this stage, Karna narrates an incident of curse from Bhagwān Parshurāma retrospectively. Due to Curse by Bhagwān Parshurāma the power of his knowledge of Archery is going to be weak.⁶⁷ At the subconscious level, according to Freud, there are related situations and life events that are piping into the level of consciousness and also influences the individual's awareness. In one verse of Karnabhāram, Karna experiences passive energy, lack of enthusiasm and anxiety in the battle field due the retrospective recall of old memories about the incident of Curse by Bhagwān Parshurāma.⁶⁸ At a conscious level of thinking, Karna in Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, tries to gather all his strength, confidence. Also he tries to overcome his inner guilt, shame, feeling of being cheated, feeling of being neglected, passive energies and melancholic feelings. Here we are able to notice Karna's strong attempt to use healthy defense mechanisms in order to project the 'ego' part of personality for enhancing his confidence and valor. This state of mind defense mechanism is called 'Sublimation'. Sublimation involves channeling unwanted and disturbing thoughts, emotions and desires into some Noble cause. Thus, at the end of Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Karna tells King Shalya that, Heaven is attained after fighting in the war and splendor is attained after winning. That's why both are very respectable.⁶⁹ Hence, Karna's repressed guilt, helplessness and melancholy had channelized into a noble act of performing war on the battlefield. Here, Karna is trying to handle his unconscious and subconscious emotions and thoughts in a rational and mature way.

⁶⁴ किं नु खलु युद्धोत्सवप्रमुखस्य दृष्टपरिक्रमस्याभूतपूर्वो हृदपरितापः। (Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Edited By Ācārya Baldev Upadhyāy, page. 4, Chowkhambha Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, 2017)

⁶⁵ अत्युग्रदीप्तवशदः समरेऽग्रगण्यः, शौर्यं च संप्रति सशोकमुपैति धीमान्। (Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Edited By Ācārya Baldev Upadhyāy, page. 5, Chowkhambha Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, 2017)

⁶⁶ वैधुर्यमापतति चेतसि युद्धकाले। (Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Edited By Ācārya Baldev Upadhyāy, page. 7, Chowkhambha Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, 2017)

⁶⁷ एतान्यस्त्राणि निर्वीर्याणीव लक्ष्यन्ते। (Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Edited By Ācārya Baldev Upadhyāy, page. 12, Chowkhambha Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, 2017)

⁶⁸ इमे हि दैन्येन निमीलितेक्षणा मुहुः स्वल्पन्तो विवशास्तुरङ्गमाः।

गजाश्च सप्तच्छददानगधिनो निवेदयन्तीव रणे निवर्तनम्। (Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Edited By Ācārya Baldev Upadhyāy, page. 12, Chowkhambha Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, 2017)

⁶⁹ हतोऽपि लभते स्वर्गं जित्वा तु लभते यशः। उभे बहुमते लोके नास्ति निष्फलता रणे। (Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Edited By Ācārya Baldev Upadhyāy, page. 12, Chowkhambha Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, 2017)

In this way, researcher tried to analyze karna's psychology in Karnabhāram by Bhāsa with reference to Psychoanalytic theory by Dr. Sigmund Freud. Blending of Unconscious, subconscious and conscious thoughts and emotions provide a clear depiction of Karna's state of mind sketched by Mahākavi Bhāsa in his Karnabhāram.

CONCLUSION

Psychology of and states of mind of Karna in Bhāsa's Karnabhāram studied and analyzed with reference to Psychoanalytic theory of Dr. Sigmund Freud.

With this comparative approach study of classical sanskrit literature and Western psychology is proposed.

Bhāsa's psychological observations and character building of Karna amalgamated with scientific and objective approach of psychology.

Ancient Indian wisdom is presented in the modern framework of theory of applied psychology.

Bibliography -

- [1] Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Edited By Ācārya Baldev Upadhyāy, Chowkhambha Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, 2017
- [2] Bhāsa's Karnabhāram, Edited By Sudhakar Malaviya, Baldev Upadhyāy, Chowkhambha Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, 1975
- [3] Baron, R. A., Mishra, G., Psychology- Indian Subcontinent Edition, Published By Pearson India Education Services Pvt. Ltd., 2017 (2016)
- [4] Beck, A., Beck, J., Cognitive Behavior Therapy : Basics and Beyond, The Guilford Press, NewYork, London, 2021