



**Girish Karnad's 'Hayavadana':  
A Study through Patanjali's 'Avidya' Klesh perspective**



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**ABSTRACT**

*Outwardly we see that human being gets trapped because of materialistic reasons and consider them responsible for his sufferings. If we think in depth, human tendencies are at the root of human sufferings. Our ancient Rishis penanced for many years and gave us precious literature for a better human life. Maharshi Patanjali was one of the greatest Indian sages. The researcher is unfolding many layers of reasons behind human sorrow with the help of Yog Kleshas written by Maharshi Patanjali in 'Patanjal Yog Darshan'. Klesha means reasons behind reaction of human mind and thought in various favorable and unfavorable situations. Avidya, Asmita, Raag, Dwesh and Abhinibesh are five*

*kleshas. These are said in the form of aphorisms (Yog Sutras). Yog sutras or specifically klesh sutras are difficult to understand in their original form. Here Avidya klesh is studied by taking support of characters in 'Hayavadana'. Researcher's focus is mainly to go at the root causes of human sufferings and the solution to overcome by them. The study of the different characters in the play affected by Avidya klesh. This research paper will be helpful for human society forever to understand the causes behind human worries and the ways to overcome. This study will be used to reduce the incompleteness of human life.*

**KEYWORDS**

*Avidya, Anitya, Ashuchi, Dukha, Anatma, Incompleteness.*

## RESEARCH PAPER

### 1) INTRODUCTION :

**Maharshi Patanjali** was a great Indian sage, a philosopher of ancient India who considered to be incarnation of Sheshnaga. Before 2400 year ago he focused humans physical mental and spiritual part. Yog sutras had written by Patanjali. He discovered causes behind human pain and also shown way to overcome by them.

**Girish Karnad** (19 May 1938-10 June 2019) was famous Indian playwright, actor, director. He has written many Kannada Plays, translated into English and performed on stage. His mostly plays are based on myths and related with general social issues. Myths and characters in 'Hayavadana' are studied here. This play is divided in two parts, sub-plot and main- plot. Our mainly focus on main- plot of the play and suffering characters by Avidya Klesha. Every character struggles on their individual level and suffered on mental, spiritual level.

In the universe all human nature, tendencies are more or less equal and the consequences of their behavior approximately equal. All human beings suffer by same reason viz: anger, love, hate, cause we all made up by same elements. It's difficult to make totally vanished it but we can minimize. This research paper is an attempt to putting causes in front of society behind human sufferings, with the help of characters in play 'Hayavadana' written by Girish Karnad from the perspective of Maharshi Patanjali's Avidya Klesha.

**अविद्यास्मितारागद्वेषाभिनिवेशः क्लेशाः** (PYS 2:3)

*Avidya, asmita, raag, dvesh, abhinivesha klesha.*

These are Five kleshas told by Patanjali which are root causes behind human suffering and unbalanced human life. **Avidya** - (Ignorance), **Asmita** -(Ego), **Raag**- (Attachment), **Dvesha**- (Detachment), **Abhinivesh**- (obsession).

**AVIDYA** (Ignorance) –

**अविद्या क्षेत्रमुत्तरेषां प्रसुप्त तनु विच्छिन्नोदाराणाम्** (PYS 2:4)

*Avidya khetrmuttresham prasupt tanu vichhinodaranam.*

There are Four stages of Avidya. 1)**Prasupt**- Sleepiness. 2)**Tanu**- Ethereal. 3) **Vichhinna**- Dissected. 4) **Udar** - Delirium. Avidya is a creator of remaining four kleshas. Human reaction is reflected by these four ways. Avidya is a base of other kleshas.

*Anitya-ashuchi-dukh-anatmsunitya-shuchi-sukh-atmkhytiavidya.*

**अनित्य- अशुची - दुःख- अनात्मससु नित्य- शुचि - सुख - आत्मख्यातिः अविद्या** (PYS 2:5)

Avidya means ignorance. In Patanjali Yog Sutra Patanjali said that Avidya is a main reason behind every human worry. Reason of each human problem is hidden in Avidya. Not only that, but cause of remaining kleshas viz Asmita, Raag, Dvesh, Abhinivesh have also ignorance. In Patanjali Yog Sutras there are given four kinds of symptoms of ignorance.

**1) Consider mutable as permanent** - Every human being understands like this. Every mutable things like, our body, wealth all will vanish one day still we consider it as permanent. And we

make attachment with them and create pains due to this. It's our Ignorance. We couldn't understand that it's all is temporary.

**2) To see pure in impure** - Outwardly we see our body is cleaned after bathing. But our body made up by **panchkosh**. We can clean our organ by bathing but what about mind and soul? Cleanness of thoughts is also important for that. And it will happen by meditation.

**3) To find joy in sorrow**. - Addiction of smoking, drinking or anything, we find joy in it rather it is harmful for us, it's all gives us temporary pleasant and in the last we suffer by them still we want to do these things again and again for joy.

**4) Hold the things which is not our forever**. – Many problems due to word 'mine' has created. Ownership on everything. Like my wealth, my land, my house or person too. Whenever we have to detach by all this, that a question stands in front of us, we never want to relieve ourselves from them, and we frustrate because of them. About our close person we wish that he/ she should behave like our thoughts. When it doesn't happen, we suffer.

#### **Victims due to Avidya in 'Hayavadana':**

**Hayavadana** is a mythological play written by Karnad. Hayavadana means a horse face. This play is a collection of two plots in which first part tells the story of person whose face of horse and body and voice of human, he is also joyless due to this condition of incomplete physical change. He wanted to become a complete human. And in second plot tells the main story of Padmini's struggle for complete companion. It focused on **incompleteness** of human life. Each and every person is thirsty and hungry for perfect life. Hunger of anything like wealth, beauty, relation, position etc. creates problems.

**Devdatta:** Devdatta is a character who is a son of brahmin Vidyasagar and a husband of Padmini. He is a smart, intelligent and wonderful poet. He had fallen in love with Padmini in first sight. He loves her so much that he is willing to do anything for her. He said that "I swear, if I ever get her as my wife, I'll sacrifice my two arms to goddess Kali, I'll sacrifice my head to Lord Rudra..."(pg.14). His strong attraction seems here towards Padmini and this is his ignorance (**Avidya**). He flows into his own stream without thinking about what she wants. He is capable or not for her. Each and any condition he wanted to him. His pledge becomes a reason of his suicide and he sacrifice his head it's tragic end due to Avidya.

**Padmini:** Padmini is a wife of Devdatta. Initially she loves to Devdatta, she admires his talent, his fairness. But she was not satisfied with physical attachment with him. She wanted more joy. After all she slowly fallen in love with Devdatta's close friend Kapila, who has strong and steel body. Her attraction towards Kapila becomes a reason to breaking strong bonds of both friends. In Padmini's desire for completeness seems her Ignorance and problems created due to this. Cause every joy is not permanent. We can cherish it just for moment. In the middle of story due to Padmini's wish, Devdatta and Kapila had done suicide, and goddess Kali had given opportunity for rebirth of both and told to attach their heads to their bodies. But puzzle creates there and she attached heads alternatively. And chosen a man who has head of Devdatta and body of Kapila. And experienced joy of completeness for a while. This change was not forever. After passing of some time. They both converted in their original form. And change has vanished.

**Kapila:** Kapila was a son of ironsmith, a friend if Devdatta. He had strong healthy body muscles. Although Padmini was his friend's wife still attracted towards her and fallen in love.

When puzzle created of Devdatta's sacrifice. Due ignorance Kapila blames himself and fear of society created in his mind. He also done suicide in front of goddess Kali. In their sacrifice hasn't seems his love towards her friend. He has done it to the rescue from other people, rather than he had to go away from his friend's personal life before it ruined. But his attachment did not allow him to do so because of Avidya (ignorance) of understanding the situation.

**Solution by Patanjali:** To get rid from klesha Patanjali told the way of Ashtangyog. (Yam, Niyam, Aasan, Pranayama, Pratyahar, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi.) in Patanjali Yog Sutras. By yogic practices human can control intensity of Kleshas and thought process.

**योगशचित्त वृत्तिनिरोधः (PYS1:2)** We can control our uncontrolled thought process by Yogic practices, specially asan, pranayama and dhyana.

**अभ्यास वैराग्य भ्याम तानिरोधः (PYS1:12)** Consistency in Yoga practice minimizes attachment towards subjects, and attains asceticism.

**तदा दृष्टः स्वरूपे स वस्थानं (PYS 1:3)** When the waves of our thoughts calm down on the basis of yoga practice, human can look itself in the formless form.

These sutras are the solution to get rid of it.

**Conclusion :** After observing characters in the play 'Hayavadana' it seems that Avidya is a root cause of human sufferings. Proper understanding of eternal and mortal its lore. And confusion between both is ignorance (**Avidya**). Overcome by Avidya klesh Patanjali has indicated the way of Yogic Practices. We can't totally remove it but we can minimize human sorrow. It is the universal solution.

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