



GENDER, COMMUNALISM AND REALITY: MAHESH DATTANI

P. XAVIER

Research Scholar in English,
Thiruvalluvar University
Vellore (TN) INDIA

B. KATHIRESAN

Associate Professor and Head i/c
Thiruvalluvar University
Vellore (TN) INDIA

ABSTRACT

This article is an attempt to discuss Gender Articulations, Communal Differences and Social Realism in the plays of Mahesh Dattani. Mahesh Dattani is the most capable and strong sensational voice in the present Indian English emotional world. The paper gives a background to the Indian drama and offers a brief outline of Dattani's biography. The major concepts are discussed briefly. Gender articulation is given a major importance of the paper. Communal Differences and its social impact are examined in detail. Social realism is credited in all its aspects. Finally, an attempt is made to assess whether the objective of paper is met. Moreover further research problems to be discussed in the plays of Mahesh Dattani are also suggested.

Key words: Social Realism, Gender Articulation, Myth, Culture and Partition

INTRODUCTION

The custom of Indian English Drama has been enhanced and enlarged further in post-independence era. Gradually, Indian drama starts to create an effective frame for the inventive articulation. The contrast between Pre-and Post Independence drama is that the vast majority of the plays have been written in verse during pre-independence period, while the post- independence writers exhibited their talents in achieving to various styles and forms. All the same, remarkable dramas keep on existing in the post- independence period. English plays are created on the phase at home and abroad effectively affecting the group of onlookers in a phenomenal way. G.V. Desani's ideal play *Hali* is performed and has won rave survey. It is effectively arranged in India and furthermore at the Watergate Theatre in London in 1950. It portrays the subject of affection and energy.

P. XAVIER

B. KATHIRESAN

1Page



Lakhan Deb and Gurucharan Das are another two dramatists of some qualification. Their plays are performed on the phase with and without India and got significant achievement. Lakhan Deb has written three dramas: *Tiger's Paw*, *Murder at the Prayer Meeting* and *Vivekanand*. The play *Tiger's Paw* discusses the murder of Biajpur General Afzal Khan by Shivaji, while *Murder at the Prayer Meeting* manages the death of Mahatma Gandhi. This play reminds us the popular play *Murder in the Cathedral* by T.S. Eliot. He has made plentiful utilization of sensational gadgets particularly tune and preface in his plays. His plays are examined with the faultless nature of verse. Likewise, Gurucharan Das has contributed to the improvement of Indian English Drama. His play *Larins Sahib* is the fine case of decolonization of English dialect in the post-independence period. His play *Mira* is organized as an expressive dance in New York and in Bombay effectively. Pratap Sharma is another emotional voice who has contributed extensively in the field of Indian English Drama. He has delivered two worthy plays. They are *A Touch of Brightness*, and *The Professor Has a War Cry*. It ought to be noted here that his plays are extreme in front of overseas audience but they could not be performed in India. Sex is the fundamental topic of his plays. Nissim Ezekiel, a notable writer, likewise composed five plays. His *Three Plays* (1969) comprising *Nalini*, a comic drama in three acts, *Marriage Poem*, a lamentable drama and *The Sleep Walkers*, an Indo- American joke, are the great analysis on the vanity and worthlessness of urban working class. He has utilized amusing dream, parody and so forth to show emptiness of urban white collar class. Steadily, Indian English play starts to reinforce its position cutting its own character and place in Indian Writing in English. It registers the striking development and procures brilliance at national and global level in the contemporary period. With the topical and dramatic advancements, Indian English Drama denotes the beginning of unmistakable convention in the domain of world drama. The dramatists discover myths, legends and history that are extremely valuable and appealing for the topical interest in their plays. The contemporary writers reinvestigate this fortune of information with drama based on socio-culture and political situation. Nonetheless, it ought to be pinpointed here that contemporary drama chiefly relies upon interpretation. The plays, written in vernacular dialects, are converted into English. In this way, the interpretation of works helped the Indian critics and scholars to investigate much upon the issues of Gender Articulation, Communal Differences and Social Realism. In this specific circumstance, the commitments of some incredible dramatists like Girish Karnad, Badal Sircar, and Vijay Tendulkar are exceptionally magnificent and events here are extraordinarily acknowledged by the literary world.

Indian English Drama has got upliftment in the last quarter of the twentieth century in the hands of Mahesh Dattani. With the qualification of the sensational vision Dattani has taken the convention of Indian English Drama on par with European conventions. He has embraced distinctive types of drama as a medium to speak about the profound human experiences. In

P. XAVIER

B. KATHIRESAN

2Page



this way, it has turned out to be obligatory to contextualize the commitment of Mahesh Dattani in the totality of dramatic custom.

Dattani has an unusual way to deal with theatre. He takes glance at the performance centre as the medium to show the reason for the unearthed problems of the general public. In his plays, Dattani visits untraversed and unexplored area of gay people, HIV constructive, third gender, and physically tested individuals. By touching upon the radical topics like gay subjects, minor sex, sufferings of transgender. Dattani has extraordinarily extended new skylines in Indian English drama.

Mahesh Dattani has given another stature and measurement to Indian English Drama. He has rendered incredible help in bringing out Indian English drama from self-reproachful presence. Dattani has supported the growth of Indian Drama like supporting a growing tree. Besides being the best known writer, Dattani is additionally presumed and achieved on-screen character, chief, scriptwriter and movie educator. Dattani's sensational craftsmanship is motivated by the mission to convey significant importance through his plays and, in this manner, he shows sharp mindfulness for the title and screen play of his own plays. His touchy sensational self is a fine blend of an artist, executive, performing artist, dramatist, crowd and analyst moving on the whole towards a solitary heading. Dattani has coordinated and acted in many plays.

Indian society is constructed in a way that hierarchy is formed upon the gender of a person, though there are only two accepted genders till the beginning of twenty-first century and the preference is always given to male. It is commonly believed that Indian society has undergone a paradigm shift from matriarchy to patriarchy. The male enjoys certain privileges by birth in the Indian society. Till two decades ago women were not given rights to study in schools and share the property of their parents. They were denied right to education, and freedom of second marriage. The social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Quaide - Millath have struggled for women empowerment while activists like Muthulakshmi Reddy, Sarojini Naidu, epitomized the importance and role played by women.

In the post- independence Indian Literature, gender discrimination is the major concern which is dealt by the majority of the writers. Many Indian women writer like Kamala Das, Anita Desai, served the cause of women emancipation. As a powerful medium of art, drama also discussed gender differences on stages. Writers like Mahesh Dattani, Girish Karnad and Vijay Tendulkar have modeled a few of their plays upon this topic.

Differences based on colour, height, gender and race form social divisions. No individual has a choice in the aforementioned concepts. Neither the birth, nor the race, gender is one's

P. XAVIER

B. KATHIRESAN

3P a g e



choice but the religion is. Unfortunately social differences based on religion in India evolved as a social division over the ages. There are many factors lying in the bottom of this evolution. To put precisely the impact of Communalism in India, it can be stated that a country is divided into three countries. Communalism played a crucial role in India- Pakistan partition which made Gandhi to call it as a “bloody partition”. Post- novelists like Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, and Shashi Tharoor focus on this communalism in their fiction. Playwrights like Ramu Ramanathan, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani concentrate on the impact of communalism within the country.

Dattani challenges the conventional development of 'India' and 'Indian' in modern theatre. He brings out how ladies endure by the directions of a society. It is exemplified in despotic father figures and furthermore spouses. Dattani goes for changing society and offers some extension for reflections. His plays will give the gathering of people some sort of knowledge into their own lives. Dattani's plays demonstrate woman's part as exceptional and he urges different writers to do likewise as our culture is so rich with convention. It is an incredible preferred standpoint and detriment on the part of the playwright. Dattani feels that it is imperative for our nation to generate new writers who reflect genuinely and absolutely our lives, since that is our commitment to the world. Mahesh Dattani is known to make stories where the individual relationships are decided based on gender. Indian culture that esteems men and male qualities more than ladies and female qualities gives a striking turn to Dattani's *Tara*. It is composed in flashback as the dramatist Chandan tries to persuade Tara always without ever realising that she has also to say something about the issues. Chandan in a way tries to dominate Tara and deprive of her rights. The story talks about different family connections, associations and the break ups in family relations. Chandan, Tara's twin sibling get ways to London, changes his name to Dan. Dattani sees *Tara* as a play about the gendered self, about dealing with the female side of 'male.' However many individuals in India consider it to be a play about a young lady.

A careful introduction and examination of public issues in the plays like *The Swami and Winston* and *The Final Solution* are rendered. Here in these two plays the bias and backwardness of the general population living in customary social orders are portrayed in an exceptionally interesting way. The stunning occasions and agonies of the vagrants are interminable. Individuals are under absolute injury. Secularism is in question in the contemporary Indian Society and different nation groups are formed. There are anguish and instability all around. India is a country at the crossroads confronting various odd issues that are crippling and testing the national solidarity and respectability. Watching over the issues such as recuperation of the outcastes, diminish in political and human regards and relationship of Mahatma Gandhi, climb of religionism and the etymological issues, modern dramatists especially Dattani, feel their moral responsibility and commitment.

P. XAVIER

B. KATHIRESAN

4Page



Dattani's plays manage genuine situations that are hard to move in the opposite direction from the scene. They are framed in Indian urban talk. They are screened in BBC to some degree effectively. They demonstrate unquestionably that Dattani is in a state of harmony with a large number of urbanites, to whom English is an Indian dialect.

Mahesh Dattani, as a genuine spectator of society, composes just what he sees and not what ought to be. All his plays are loaded with issue and the way in which he observes. Every play of Dattani raises some unmistakable issues concerning the different issues polluting the solid issues of society. The outstanding stage executive Alyque Padamsee is extremely sensible when remarks on the play "The evil presences of mutual disdain are not out in the city... they are prowling inside us" (Padamsee, 161). Dattani's idea is certain that it is vested gatherings expectation ought to happen, as contempt is spread among society. They leave their psyche and utilize heart on the grounds that the gathering dependably raises some amazing and enthusiastic issue identified with religion that requests confidence and that's it. People are scared and candidly extorted that on the without chance that they don't leave the issue, their religion is in threat. Padamsee expresses that "The crowd ... is representative of our own contempt and neurosis. Every individual from the horde is an individual yet they merge into one fuming entire when government officials play on their dread and tensions" (Padamsee 161).

The plays of Dattani visualise the mind-set of the people and the eyes are to some degree unique. But the horde, in obliviousness has taken the necessary steps in an unexpected way. Dattani has a fantasy of solidarity of both the groups – the Hindu and the Muslims. His basic role in this play is to keep up a workable solidarity and co-operation between these two driving groups of India. He is by all accounts entirely against an 'ism' and needs to see every single man of the nation as an Indian. In this regard, he is by all accounts especially and influenced by the sentiments of solidarity and fraternity among the general population of the nation. To entirety, it could be stated that Dattani has effectively tried to dissemble this suspicion and to recuperate and recover the life of the general population on the edges. This is a study of brutality.

Social realism is the branch of realism that is known to portray the substances of society. Realism has grown more grounded than at any other time in the Victorian time frame and has been known to focus on the indiscretions of individuals and society from that time onwards. Realism, in writing, is an approach that endeavours to portray existence without glorification or sentimental subjectivity. In spite of the fact that realism is not restricted to any one century, it is regularly connected with the abstract development in nineteenth century France,



particularly with the French authors Flaubert and Balzac. George Eliot brought authenticity into Britain, and William Dean Howells brought it into the United States.

Realism is a style that gives an impression of recording or on the other hand 'reflecting' steadfastly a real lifestyle. Realism established itself as a critical custom in the late nineteenth and mid twentieth century by Henrik Ibsen, Bernard Shaw, and many others utilised it thoroughly. It remains a standard tradition of film media. In the dramas, realism is most intently connected with Ibsen's social plays.

In the cutting edge or present day period the issues of the general public have changed their effect on individuals stayed. Different scholars have depicted the changing nature in Indian moral society that monetary issues are changed into moral issues, writers like Dattani discovered that it is their obligation to exhibit such issues into plays. Dattani is known for advancing the issues that straightforwardly concern the general public. This is a 'cutting edge society' and escape by every one of the improvements around, however Dattani through his strange perception, pulled characters from a similar society never thought existed.

The unmistakable subject in the majority of Dattani's plays is the unending changes and bargains individuals submit for a stately position in the general public, against all the chances. Dattani has been extremely effective in revealing in the social structure of our country and dealing the subjects which individuals still feel are alien to them.

WORKS CITED :

- Das, Bijay Kumar. *Form and Meaning in Mahesh Dattani's Plays*. New Delhi: Atlantic, 2008. Print.
- Dattani, Mahesh. *Collected Plays*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2000. Print
- Dhawan, R.K. and Tanu Pant. eds. *The Plays of Mahesh Dattani: A Critical Resposne*. New Delhi: Prestige, 2012. Print.
- Iyengar, Srinivasa. *Indian Writing In English*. New Delhi: Sterling, 2015. Print.
- Joshiyura, Pranav. *A Critical Study of Mahesh Dattani's Plays*. New Delhi: Sarup Book Publishers, 2009. Print.
- Multani, Angelie. ed. *Mahaesh Dattani's Plays: Critical Perspectives*. New Delhi: Pencraft, 2016. Print.
- Padamsee, Alyque. *Note on the Play*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2009. Print.