

Review Article

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The tension between Ideology and Realities in Vijay Tendulkar's *Kanyadaan*

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Abstract

Ideology is a social or political philosophy that combines realistic and theoretical elements, aiming to explain and change the world. It explores the nature, history, and significance of ideologies in philosophical, political, and international contexts, discussing various categories such as socialism, communism, nationalism, fascism, liberalism, and conservatism. Reality is a literary technique where authors depict everyday life without embellishment or fantastical plots. Literary realism focuses on everyday people and places, avoiding flowery language, exotic settings, and epic stories.

Caste has a major role in the unity and dissolution of Indian society. Caste values have a noticeable influence on almost every aspect of life, including marriage, education, social interactions, careers, and cultural behavior. Caste is a social group that shares traits in terms of lifestyle, vocation, and social reputation that is innate. The word "caste," which refers to race, lineage, and breed of pure origin, is derived from the Portuguese word "casta." "A segmentation of society into groups whose membership is resolute by birth following a hierarchical system wherein the Brahmins are usually at the head of hierarchy and others living on the margin; restrictions on feeding, social intercourse, and marrying a person outside; commonly inherited occupation,"

Understanding the notion of caste exposes us to a hierarchical ranking made up of different individuals who live in the centre and are higher than those who are at the bottom. Because of their higher and central location, they have the "power" and "authority" to govern over "inferior others" who are "less powerful" or "powerless." The term "social relations" refers to the power structure in this social system. These factors are out of balance, which causes societal unrest and stress. In India, marriage plays a crucial role in the caste system, and intercaste unions are seen as a means of eradicating caste.

Keywords

Ideology,
Reality,
Literary realism,
hierarchical system,
social relations.

Introduction

Vijay Tendulkar, a famous playwright in India, he was born in 1928 into a Brahmin family in Kolhapur, Maharashtra. He left school at age fourteen due to Gandhi's anti-British Quit India movement. Tendulkar was fervent about writing, attending theater performances, and writing for newspapers. In the early 1970s, he turned to cinema, writing screenplays in India's new flourish cinema movement.

Tendulkar's early play *Grihastha* was controversial, but his later works, such as *Shrimant and Sakharan Binder*, gained him more concentration. His writings appreciably changed the storyline of modern Marathi theatre in the 1950s and 60s. Tendulkar wrote several screenplays for movies, including *Nishant* (1974), *Akrosh* (1980), and *Ardh Satya* (1984). He has written eleven movies in Hindi and eight in Marathi.

In the 1990s and 2000s, he returned to literature and theatre with plays *Safar* (1991) and *The Masseur* (2001), as well as novels *Kadambari: Don and Kadambari: Ek*. His first play in English was *His Fifth Woman* (2004). Despite his acclamation, Tendulkar faced accusations of obscenity, unnecessary violence, and elementary exhibitionism of sexuality, anti-Brahmanism, historical misrepresentations and copying. He was burned in statue in several Indian states after one of his supporting statements. He was married to Nirmala and had four children, two of whom preceded him in death.

In the play *Kanyadaan*, Vijay Tendulkar, he contemplates the nature of power dynamics within the caste system, the power construction of social relations, the terrible consequences of inter-caste marriage, the depressed state of women in Indian society, and the process of going from optimism about social change to realism about human suffering. The institution at dispute is the union of Arun, a poet and politically illiterate Dalit man from a scavenging family, and Jyoti,

a well-educated, wealthy and powerful Brahmin lady.

There are seven characters there in this play, including Nath Diwalkar, an MLA, his wife Seva, an MSc student, Arun and Jyoti, a 20-year-old clever girl, discuss the conflict between upper class and Dalit society. The play discovers the hierarchical system in society, based on caste, class, and gender, which divides society into upper and lower groups. Marriage, a principal aspect of this division, is a self-created problem.

Nath, an MLA, and his wife Seva, a social worker, are separated into two groups based on caste. Jaiprakash, an MSc student, and Jyoti, a clever 20-year-old, are part of the family. The play highlights the need for a new religion where all are treated equally and humanly, a idea similar to Rabindranath Tagore's *Chandalika*. The play begins with Nath preparing to leave for Pune and enquiring about Seva's return from Ahmednagar. Jyoti, an intelligent 20-year-old, tries to speak with Nath with uncertainty, as her parents are busy addressing the public and organizing women's camps and rallies. Jyoti has been frustrating to make a conversation with her parents for the last 15 days, expressing her desire to speak to both of them together. "Kanyadaan" explores the complex connection between caste, class, and gender in Indian society, highlights the need for a new religion that treats all equally and kindly.

Jyoti, a young woman, decides to marry Arun Athavale, who is working part-time in a Shramik Samachar. She has met him in the socialists' study group and has been there for the last two months. Jyoti informs her family members of her decision to marry Arun, who is doing his BA. Seva, a traditional Indian mother, expresses her concern about Arun's economic stability and the well-being of her daughter.

Seva's character demonstrates to be traditional, taking into consideration factors such as caste, economic status, character, and background of the bridegroom. Jyoti dismisses her mother's request

to reconsider her decision, but she dismisses her mother's worry about her sexual relationship with Arun. Jyoti brings Arun to her house, where he becomes uncomfortable and asks Jyoti not to leave him. Tendulkar portrays the actual feeling of a lower class person's embarrassment and the thoughts of a low class person about the management of workers or lower class people.

Arun's persuasiveness on untouchability expresses his state of mind and his downgraded words for himself, which show his inadequacy and hatred for Brahmins. He asks Jyoti to marry him and live in a slum village toilet like his mother, and to beg for grass for buffaloes. Jyoti laughs and the situation gets normal. Suddenly, Arun twists her arm, giving Jyoti an unbearable pain that she cannot bear. She tries to blow upon the arm to decrease the pain, but he apologizes again. Seva sees everything and reacts normally. She starts talking to Arun about his education, economic background, and family.

Tendulkar presents a picture of the second half of the 20th century Indian society where the dilapidated value of education appears clearly. Seva asks Arun about possible sources of income in the future, and Arun gets aggravated and replies that he will brew illicit liquor. Arun explains that it is a first-class profession for persons, with the man bribing the police and the wife serving customers. People call her aunty, and the more arresting the aunty's looks, the brisker the trade. Jyoti makes a choice to marry Arun Athavale, a young Dalit man, who works part-time in a Shramik Samachar. Seva's character demonstrates the traditional Indian society and the significance of considering factors such as caste, economic status, character, and background when making decisions about marriage.

SEVA: He is not someone who can fit in among us.

NATH: Why? He is a dalit, is that why?

SEVA: [Sharply] Don't imagine you are the only one with a liberal soul among us. We too know what it is to look beyond caste.

NATH: Then what is it that prevents his fitting in here, in this home.

SEVA: His culture...

NATH: [Breaking out in fury] What do you mean by that? Manners and culture, are they your ancestral property? He is good boy...he is well behaved...can anyone be that without culture? (521-522)

The argument highlights the significance of caste and culture in society, with individuals being judged and received based on their social position. Seva and Jayaprakash, the highest in the hierarchy, are not ready to accept Arun, a Dalit who is jobless, short-tempered, and unruly. Jyoti's optimistic father, who believes in a casteless society, appreciates Jyoti's stand and believes that words alone cannot transform society. Nath struggles to convince Seva that they must act as catalysts for alteration, citing the success of old social reformers who actually married widows.

Jyoti, a woman who is married to Arun Athavale, is a fatality of his abusive deeds towards her family. Despite the resistance from Seva and Jayaprakash, Nath takes Jyoti's favor and praises Arun's physique and writing skills. Tendulkar presents a polluted picture of society where people take smoking as an arrogant habit and openly boast about it, touching many people in the society.

Jyoti and Arun get married with Nath's support, but what follows is a series of violence, misery, and disillusionment. Seva feels the behavior of Jyoti has changed since she got married, and she now feels miserable. She complains about Jyoti to Nath, who always favors Jyoti and does not force anyone to change her decision. In this society, women are free from patriarchal decision systems where they are tied to follow whatever verdict passed by their family.

After marriage, Jyoti's life gets completely changed and Arun's behavior towards her as well. Her turbulent day starts loving her and she becomes a poor, pathetic wife of Arun Athavale

who comes home every night taking alcohol and beatings his wife, Jyoti. When her father tries to know the reason for not going back to Arun, she breaks into unmanageable sobs. Nath wants to reduce Arun's domination so he asks his family with the proposal of Arun's stay with Jyoti in their house but is rejected by Jyoti herself. Jayprakash and Seva also don't like his stay, as he was like a complete boor from the beginning. For Nath, this marriage is an experiment, and he does not want it to be a failure.

Arun comes to take her with him by saying 'sorry' and doing a lot of melodrama, saying I will cut off my hands with the knife when she refuse to go with him. Seva enquires the reason of beating, and Arun says all nonsense, saying that he is the son of a hunter and a Barbarian by birth. He also says that drinking and beating is common to his family as his father also does the same. Jyoti comes out and feels discomfited and says to Arun, in bracing tones, "we are leaving." The husband-wife relationship between Hindu and Dalit families is described by famous Dalit critic Kancha Ilaiah, who observes that in contemporary Indian literature, the image of women has changed to a Greater level. Modern writers have tried to change this image of women as seen in myths by portraying them in a more realistic manner. Arun, driven by lower caste anger, struggles to reunite with his current situation and constantly feels troubled. He seeks revenge against higher caste people by beating Jyoti, who herself shares his mental state with her father.

Arun is both the beast, and the lover. Arun is the demon, and also the poet. Both are bound together, one within the other, they are one. So closely bound that at times it is not possible to distinguish the demon from the poet. Filthy cursing is a part of his frenzied love; a sudden shower of hard, ardent kisses accompanies the rain of blows. (564)

In this play, the power of caste becomes so important that Jyoti accepts her inferiority as a woman and represents a higher caste before Arun, a lower caste. The setback of victimizers and victims reflects the power patterns in social

hierarchy. Jyoti feels like she has been transformed from a Brahmin to a scavenger due to her agonies, reflecting the power dynamics in society.

Nath proves to be the follower of ideals in his life, and he does not believe in God. In a discussion between Seva and Nath, Jyoti tells him that Jyoti is pregnant in her sixth month and is admitted in the hospital, bleeding. She explains the reason behind it, which is Arun and his violence. Jayaprakash comes and talks about the Jews as the exploited and the murders. He tries to refer to Arun as the victimizer, highlighting the oppression of the oppressed.

Arun invites Nath to give a speech on his autobiography, but Nath denies, fearing the consequences of his actions. Seva insists that Nath deliver the speech with the consent of his heart, but Jyoti feels bad about her father's hypocrisy. She visits her maternal house to know the reason and is angry at Nath's hypocrisy. Jyoti leaves the house, saying never to return, stopping her father from touching her. Nath tries hard to end caste-based society but this is an illusion, and life takes him to the reality that "Apples are apples and oranges are oranges."

In the drama, Nath, initially an idealist, becomes a realist and becomes angry at the arrival of a Dalit, Arun, polluting his home. Jyoti leaves Nath's home, never to return. The drama leaves readers questioning the future of Jyoti's marriage, as it fails, suggesting that the class-divide and conflict between the upper-class and Dalit will persist, and a sad conclusion.

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