

PROBLEMS AND HARMONY: A STUDY OF HARSH SOCIAL REALITY IN MAHESH DATTANI'S *FINAL SOLUTION*

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Religion is a dominating instrument for human life. It determines and gives chance a person to live and also to die. It preaches a person to love, to pardon, to serve. This drama is the contribution of Mahesh Dattani to the last decade of 20th century. This novel mainly discusses about the religious problems and skirmish between the styles and values of modern and traditional. In the country like India there are always secular atmosphere. But the narrow minded fundamentalists of different religion is like a disease that always breaks the bridge between the healthy relationship of Hindus and Muslims. Dattani through his play *Final Solution* depicted the social problems that are carrying out by both religion and some possible remedies that can repair the bridge of harmony between the two religions. As commented by Amar Nath Prasad:

Manesh Dattani comes in the category of writers who champion the cause of true art– free from any theory, universal in taste and flavour, appealing to all sections of society, never bound to any caste, class and creed.(Prasad 2007:262)

Dattani used his drama as a mirror to visualize the orthodox and unprogressive aspects of society which infuse the disparity between Hindu and Muslims where there are several issues throughout the world like Global warming which can finish the human society. The characters are divided into two categories. The first category is Hindu with the characters like Hardika, Ramnik

Gandhi, his wife and daughter Samita and the second group is Muslim comprises Javed, Bobby and their family members. The chorus is also played the same.

Dattani curved his characters with his own prudence. The Ramnik's family has four members of different age. The head of the family is Ramnik Gandhi who is a professional business man and rational man who has a liberality towards Muslims. His wife is a typical and conservative house wife for whom the safety and pleasure of her husband and family is the ultimate. She is totally opposite to her husband. She has a deep faith and pride on her own religion. Her daughter is an educated young girl who is modern in attitude and rational girl. The primeval member of this family is Hardika who always poisons the society who is always the curse the religion by the words like 'Muslims' and 'Islams'.

Dattani used his comments in an ironical manner to shatter the incident of the idol passing on Rath yatra occasion. He described it as:

RAMNIK

The rath yatra started as it does every year from the Vishnu Mandir a few hours before midnight. It passed Shanti Road, Nehru Gardens, and when it reached to Kareem Bagh, the trouble started. Nobody knew how.

They say someone threw stone at the idol. Someone else said it was sabotage. (Dattani 193)

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After the occurrence of breaking the idol the local authority has to impose the curfew in the place. But some of the political figure who has the power served this news in a wrong way for their own profit.

The indulged the people to make riot and produce hatred among themselves. Even Javed also confessed in the drama that he is paid to create such a kind of riots in different places.

Throughout the drama Dattani visualize the religious problems. When the two muslim boy came to Gandhi's house the debility between duty and problem came out. The curfew is in the town and these boys are chased by the Hindu mass because they are very angry for the breaking of the chariot and idol and also the murdered of the priest. But Ramnik's wife is not ready to allow them. Her mother Hardika also in the same state. Their presence in the house raises the panic. As she uttered with this:

"How could he let these people into my house? They killed his grandfather. They will hate us for protecting them. Asking for help makes them feel they are lower than us. I know! They don't want equality. They want to be superior."

Ramnik discusses sundry issues with Bobby and Javed. And the hidden truth comes out that Javed is used as a scapegoat by his own community to infuse the riot. But as Ramnik offered him a job in his own cloth shop it is totally objected by her mother Hardia. She cannot forgive this community who killed her father. She states in Act-III as:

"That night I couldn't sleep. I listened. I was angry that Ramnik was blinded by his ideals. Why did he offer that boy a job in our shop? What was he doing? How did he know they were innocent? Couldn't he see there was more violence in that boy's eyes than those stone throwers' threats? He wasn't just saving two boys from getting killed. This was something else Ramnik was trying to do."

The hatred of the other religion is shown when Aruna, Ramnik's wife gave the water to them for their thirst. She picked the glass with her two fingers. She fumbles to provide a glass of water. When her husband told her to provide some food as they are hungry she cringes with detestation. Bobby and Javed also break all the rules when they are about to leave the house. Before leaving they took the holy idol from the altar which is very much holy to Aruna. He declared:

See! See! I am touching God!.... Your God! My flesh is holding Him! Look, Javed! And He does not mind!... He does not burn me to ashes! He does not cry out from the heavens saying He has been contaminated!... Look how He rests in my hands! He knows I cannot harm Him. He knows His strength! I don't believe in Him but He believes in me. He smiles! He smiles at our trivial pride and our trivial shame..... He feels me. And he welcomes it! I hold Him who is sacred to them, but I do not commit sacrilege. [To Aruna] You can bathe Him day and night, you can splash holy waters on Him but you cannot remove my touch from His form. You cannot remove my smell with sandal paste and attars and fragrant flowers because it belongs to a human being who believes, and tolerates, and respects what other human beings believe. That is the strongest fragrance in the world! (Hossain 159)

Now the question appears that is there any remedy or way out to solve the lifelong problem of communal problems between Hindu and Muslim which is going on till today? Dattani tried to provide some remedies through his characters. Both Ramnik who represents the experienced and the youth Smita, Bobby and Javed presents a hope that it will be settle down in future. The experienced Ramnik Gandhi is not like his wife and mother. Though once he helped his father to light the fire on a shop of a Muslim and took that with a low price but now he has love and affection for the other community. He saved their life from the mob and provide them shelter and food without hearing the protest of his wife and

mother. Not only has that he even offered a job in his own cloth shop. It is totally opposed by her mother. He confessed his evil deed to everyone. "It's the same burnt-up shop we bought from them at half its value.' He acknowledges frankly, 'And we burnt it. Your husband, My father and his father. They had burnt it in the name of communal hatred.'" They had a belief that he could not set the shop once again. So he now wants to expiate it by giving a job to Javed. Her mother also gets puzzled by this news.

Smita is another hope for the communal harmony. She is an educated modern woman and has friend from other community. She has no orthodox cultural practices like her mother. She even treats those two Muslim young persons as her own friend. She picks the bed-sheet and pillows with her own hand not like her mother. She offers her own washroom to them for refreshment. Bobby is also a person who tries to turn Javed from a dead end to a new light.

CONCLUSION

Dattani's *Final solution* is a response of his own to the occasional riots and breaking of the bridge in the name of community. The play represents the disparity between the majority and the minority. The majority people fails to provide the same importance and position to the minority people the problems like riot and others come across. As he stated:

"They invariably do. Social issues move me and I like to examine

an idea from different angles. The plays where the

content came first are On a Muggy Night and Final Solutions.

As for the latter, I was asked to write a play about communal

tensions and I said, 'what can one write about that other than

platitudes?' But out of that churning emerged Final Solutions."

[From excerpts of a newspaper interview]

These riots don't care about any one. Even in the play the set fire in a hostel of minority girls because of the girls are entitled with Muslims. Similarly they want to kill the two boys who are by birth Muslims. The dramatist pointed out that only the amity and good will can established an eternal relationship between the two communities.

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