

Final Solution Deals with The Conflict Between Two Cultures (The Hindus and The Muslims)

By:

Assistant Instructor .Halima Ismail Radam. College Basic Education /University of Diyala/

Abstract:

India is a country of saints and seers who have always preached the lesson of love, harmony, co-operation and respect for each other's sentiments. If we follow the preaching of our elders in letter and spirit, we shall love all religions equally well and there will not arise any occasion for conflict. It is rightly written in the scriptures of all religions that all paths lead to the same God Even if they worship gods in different ways. Yet they should try to realize the underlying spirit in each religion and that is to serve mankind which is basically one. It is very sad that in our country often sectarian riots take place. Sometimes, the grounds are quite flimsy or trivial. The people need some awakening and joint efforts by enlightened people of all sectarian ties as piece is good for all and strife is harmful to everybody. It is said that the partition of our country, sowed the real seeds of sectarian disharmony. We must understand that India is constitutionally a secular country where people of all religions, castes and creeds can live enjoying equal rights and opportunities for progress and have the same stake in the welfare of the nation let us all forget our petty religious differences.

Keywords: *Solutions, conflict cultures, Hindus, Muslims, Sectarianism, Dattani, Communalism.*

Section One

1-1 . Introduction

Mahesh Dattani is a remarkable dramatist of India and final solutions can be called his masterpiece. It is the play which won Sahitya Akademi Award for Dattani. The play deals with the traditional theme of sectarianism. It shows the hated between the antique enemies. The Hindus and the Muslims. The theme is reflected in the title too. The fact may be explained as follows.

First, **The chorus who represent the mob stand for both the Hindu and Muslim people.** They sometimes wear the Hindu masks and sometimes the Muslim ones. The masks reveal their difference of nature. The Muslim mob blame the Hindu's and justify

their own position. On the contrary, the Hindus blame the Muslims and support their own views. The Hindu chorus, for example, say:

Chorus 2,3: They broke our 'rat' They broke our chant and failed our gods!

Chorus 1,2,3: This is our land! How dare they?

Chorus 1: It is in their blood!

Chorus 1,2,3: It is in their blood to destroy.

Similarly, the Muslim chorus at one place comment:

Chorus 1: A drop of oil cannot merge with an ocean of milk. One reality cannot accept another reality.

Secondly, *there is a severe conflict between the Hindu characters and the Muslim ones*. Daksha, the Hindu, young girl calls the independence " a most terrible thing". She is angry with the fighting of the Hindu and the Muslim people after the partition of India. Diksha's family is friendly related to the Muslim family of Zarine. Daksha is interested in the songs of Noor Jehan but her parents-in-law do not allow her to go to her house. Not only this but the shop of Zarine's parents is burnt by Hari and his father and then is bought for less amount.

However, the main incident showing the religious conflict is the breaking of the chariot and the beating of the two Muslim boys. The chariot with gods comes in the street of the Muslims. Then stones are thrown on the chariot. The chariot falls down and the gods too fall on the road. Somebody kills the pujari and the chariot remains on the road. As a result, riots take place. The boys, Baban and Javed, are beaten seriously. They enter the house of Ramnik. Therefore, their lives are saved. To save riots, curfew is declared. The chorus says: "A drop of oil cannot merge with an ocean of milk. One reality cannot accept another reality".

Javed angrily says:

" They will arrest me don't worry. To please people like you. And a few innocent Muslims to please everyone". The writer thus reveals the conflict between the two communities. However, he has to teach us that in reality we are all human beings. There are good Hindus as well as good Muslims. They can be friends and even lovers. Daksha has a Muslim friend. Zarine. She goes to her house and listens to the music of Noor Jehan. Her father-in-law and Zarine's parents were friends. Similarly, Javed and Baban know Smita. Smita and Tasneem are friends.

Tasneem is the sister of Javed. Baban loves Tasneem. He also likes Smita and Smita freely says that she has no rivalry for Tasneem. Javed deliberately comes to the house of Smita, he asks Smita if she really does not sacrifice for Tasneem. Towards the ending of the play. Ramnik becomes emotional, he regrets for their ill- behavior to the parents of Zarine. Thus, the play is mainly about the traditional theme, the conflict between Hindus and Muslim.

Section Two

2-1 Mahesh Dattani as: Early life And background

Mahesh Dattani was born in Bangalore at 7 August 1958 is an Indian. He went to Baldwin Boys High School and then went on to join Josephs College, Bangalore Dattani is a graduate in history. Economics and political science. He is a post- graduate in marketing and advertising management. After reading Edward Albee's play whose afraid of Virginia Woolf in his early life. Mahesh was interested in writing. He was in flounced by Gujarati play Wright Madhu Rye's Kumarni Agashi and developed interest in play writing (Baskaran, 2012: 3).

Mahesh Dattani began his career as a compywriter an advertising firm. In 1986, he wrote his first, full- length play. Where There's A will'. And since 1995, he has been working as a ful-time theater professional. He has also worked with his father in the family business. Dattani is also a film director. His debut film is Mango Souffle adapted from one of his plays. (Roy, 2013, 24).

2-2 Dattani and Final Solution

Final Solutions Centers around the Gandhis, a middle class Hindu family in Gujarat, who find themselves in a challenging predicament when two young Muslim men seek refuge in their home during a communal riot. The Gandhi family comprises of the secular Ramnik, his staunchly religious wife Aruna, his mother Hardika, who is survivor of the partition of India and Pakistan, and his daughter Smita, a college student. The two Muslims who come to Ramnik's home seeking protection are the liberal- minded Babban, who prefer to go by Bobby and his childhood friend Javed, (Pillai, 2012).

Dattani's Final Solutions is a very serious and delicate drama on the well- worn subject of communalism. He is first staged in Bangalore in 1993 focusing on the

problem of communal disharmony between the Hindus and Muslim in India, especially during the period of the post- partition rot.

The play highlights the intolerant attitude and the lack of accommodation between the two communities and unacceptability gives rise to acrimony resulting in terrorism and anarchy. The play itself is a question-mark on this age-old enmity between the communities wondering if there would ever be a final solution to this endemic problem. Though the play *Final Solutions* is outwardly focused on Hindu-Muslim communal hatred, the undercurrent theme is even more powerful for it unwinds the ideological differences and hostility amongst the members (Srinivas, 2014: 53).

Section Three

3-1. Final Solutions and the problem of Communalism in India

Final Solutions by Dattani was staged in the back drop of the communal fever dripping not only India but also many other Islamic countries, particularly in India. The play by Jehan posing the people belonging to two different and dominating communities in India-Hindu and Muslim divided on the basis of their religious and the basis of their religious and cultural beliefs once again opens up the wounds of communal violence inflicted on humanity during partition. The characters delineated in the play fall into two categories; one group comprises of Hindus such as Hardika, Ramnik Gandhi, his wife and daughter Samita while the other comprises of Muslims like Javed, Bobby and their family members; even chorus which plays a very significant role in the development at action in the play represents these two communities.

For the Indian, the most important battle for the establishment of a distinctive identity within a territorial location lay in the partitioning of India. National identities were conceived and took shape in accordance with the ideologues that formulated these on the basis of religions (and later, linguistic, ethnic, caste), identities. The gruesome rioting and communal/ religious disharmony that took seed in 1947 has continued to throw up countless at such incidents independent to secular India, (Chaudheri, 2005: 77).

The issue at religious bigotry is dealt with very minutely by the playwright and it assumes enormous importance in the background of our history and cultural variety. Our fore father witnessed a lot of bloodshed, violence and atrocities perpetrated by one community or the other where both parties had equal share in robbing others of their fortune and honor. Even the hardener fanatics like Aruna can hide her true face of

hypocrisy and the gift of gab while convincing Javed about her respect for other religious:

" Please try to understand. We have nothing against you. It is only that we have our ways and customs and ... and...we are equal. There is no doubt. We respect your religion and we wish you well. Why, we have friends who are... Samita has so many friends who are not ... all religion is one. Only the ways to God are many" (Dattani, 2010: 55).

When one starts realizing the implication of the views put forth by Bobby then no one will ask us to leave for Pakistan or India, there will be no blame game as who did what and to whom and why in the past and the lines uttered by chorus 1 that ' A drop of oil cannot merge with an ocean of milk. One reality cannot accept another reality' will remain pointless Samita, Bobby, and Ramnik make the plea that we need to belong to all the creations of the pleasures, trials and tribulations, aims and aspirations of all the mankind without any selectivity on racial of communal grounds. When we are able to assimilate all the diverse forces running through our social fabric.

Then we hope a new pattern based on human qualities will emerge and this will as Bobby suggests pave the way for the final solution: " The tragedy is that there is too much that is sacred. But if we understand and believe in one another, nothing can be destroyed. And if you are willing to forget, I am willing to tolerate" (Dattani, 2010: 74).

3-2 The Conflict Between Two Cultures (The Muslims And The Hindus)

The Muslim community in India is the second largest community in India, following the Hindu Community, and it forms the largest Muslim minority in the world. Ever since the decline of Moghul rule in India, Muslims in India have been facing communal riots and conflicts from some segments of the Hindu community who are communalists and militants. (Ibid).

Again culture plays important role in Final Solutions. India is known for unity in diversity. There was no distinction between the Hindus and the Muslims till the British came to India to divide and rule on the religious ground. The disgruntled voice heard in the India life is an offshoot of dirty politics which relies on communal difference and caste vote issue. Dattani maintains the truth, the love, and the beauty of these cultural ethos and culture to achieve the goal of making a real and ideal world. Final Solutions highlights Communal hatred caused by lack of understanding. It addresses an issue of utmost concern to our society, the issue of communalism, However, the play comprises

the issue of class and communities, identity, terrible human suffering, loss of faith perpetual hatred, aggressiveness and nothingness within the larger socio- political context. Dattani gives the message that the Final Solutions comprise in the words like tolerance, generosity and respect for other human beings, which are the strength of Indian culture (Kumar, 2012: 2).

In 1998, Mahesh Dattani made history by becoming the first English-language playwright to win the Sahitya Academy Award, the highest literary honor a writer in Indian can achieve. The work Dattani received the award for was a collection entitled Final Solutions and other plays. The bestowment of this prestigious award indicates that the Indian literary community regards Dattani as one of the nation's best playwrights. However, just because the members of India's National- Academy of letters like a plays text, does not necessarily mean that audience members will be as receptive to a theatrical production of the play. As woodruff notes, although " Literary critics have for generations pleased. Themselves by taking theater to be a little more than the enactment of literary text", theater is not simply literature (Woodruff, 2008: 43).

In Final Solutions undergo a transformation in the course of the play through the process of dialogue. Javed may not be able to completely trust Hindus at the end at the play, yet the audience sees him begin to respect them as he spends more and more time with the Gandhis. As he tells Aruna, "we are not very different . You can me , we both feel pride". By sharing with his mother the past actions of their family, Ramnik enables Hardika to begin a crucial process of reflection and forgiveness. Javed and Bobby's were presence allows Smita to express her true feeling about her- religious upbringing to her mother (Pillai, 2012: 107).

One community hates another. One community is in the majority, the other is in the minority. Consequently, the two communities are at loggerheads, living in a atmosphere of conflict and acrimony. Mahesh Dattani's rare look at the sociopolitical problem defines all ' Final Solutions'. In Dattani's view Hindus and Muslims are not just two cardboard communities. They clash when a procession is stoned, a Pooja is disrupted, a mosque is dismantled. These for him, are just the jagged tips of an ominous iceberg. One that threatens to freeze the entire landscape into polarized communities that live by intolerance and hate in place of harmony. More important is the iceberg an amorphous mass that glorifies the credo of unity in diversity without actually understanding the meaning of diversity. (Chaudhuri, 2005: 65).

The play looks straight in to the heart of fundamentalist and the liberal and tears down, the prototypes. " Final Solutions" touches us. The past begins to determine the outlook of the present and thus the earlier contradictions re- emerge. No concrete

solutions are provided in the play to the problem of communalism but it raises questions on secularism and pseudo secularism. It forces us to look at ourselves in relation to the attitudes that are persisting in the society. Since it is an experiment in time and space and relates to memory, it is a play, which involves a lot of introspection on the part of introspection on the part of the characters in the play and thus induces similar introspection in the viewers. I have attempted to experiment with the chorus. It has been used in a style, which I would like to call 'realistic stylization'. The chorus represents the conflicts of the characters. Thus, the chorus in sense is the psychophysical representation of the characters and also provides the audience with the visual images of the character's conflicts. There is no stereotyped use of the characterization of the chorus because communalism has no face, it is an attitude and thus it becomes an image of the characters. The sets and properties used in the play are simple. This has been done to accentuate the internal conflicts and the subtext of the play. Thus the play becomes a timely reminder of the conflict raging not in India but in other parts of the world (Chaudhuri, 2005: 108).

3-3. There is no solutions

India since ancient times has the history of communal violence and it has grown up witnessing all that goes with this sectarian divide and selective preferences. This undercurrent of mistrust runs unabatedly between the two most dominating communities in the sub-continent-Hindu and Muslim-as generation after generation this feeling of cultural and communal animosity is further transmitted to the coming generation, making the next moment frightening and scary for the inhabitants of this world. The mistrust between the two communities emanates on account of expression of cultural hegemony, difference in the religious practices and by playing the role of godfather by the majority. The finger pointing at each other as the narrow minded fundamentalists on both sides poses the biggest danger to the establishment of healthy relationship between the Hindus and the Muslims. Here the playwright Mahesh Dattani explores some possibilities for solution to the problem of communal divide in his play Final Solutions and ultimately suggests some remedies in this regard. The dramatist feels that liberal outlook with a conciliatory approach and respect for one-another's beliefs, mutual trust and sharing of pleasures and pains can help in overcoming the man-made communal divide where individual will be treated as a human being and not as a Hindu or Muslim. Thus , there is no solutions.

Conclusion

The title of the play 'Final Solutions' is quite meaningful. Its significance may be stated as follows

The play is social and Satirical. It deals with the traditional conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims. The enmity between the two communities is a chronic problem. Dattani wants to ask us: "Are there any 'Final Solutions' to this burning problem?". The answer to the question is perhaps 'no'. This is because the Hindus and the Muslims quarreled in the past and they still attack one another.

At present the **chariot of the Hindus taking their idols is attacked by the Muslims.** The 'gods' fall down as the chariot is broken. The priest has been stabbed by a Muslim man as a result riots take place. The Muslim Hostle is attacked by some Hindus. One of the girls there is the friend of Smita, the daughter of a Hindu gentleman. Similarly. Javed and Baban are suspected to have a hand in the chariot of episode. So they are beaten seriously by the Hindus. Smita knows the boys and her father saves their lives by giving them shelter in their house. Smita's mother and her grandmother do not like the boys.

Thus, both the Muslims and the Hindus know that they are wrong but they fail to find out 'Solution's to their problem'.

Thus, Dattani, through the play Final Solutions, explored issues of identity, memory. Suffering and loss and resulting, other, bashing, either/ or terms of reference within the larger political context, through the various products of this play. He through this beautiful realistic presentation of two major groups of India, has tried his best to provide a workable solution to fill up the gap between the Hindus and the Muslims. His primary concern as a writer of drama is to expose the various maladies of society and whenever necessary to give some proper solutions through the medium of literature. He seems to be very certain in protecting his vision of secularism in which both the communities live together with happiness.

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