



## ***Kanyadaan: A Study on the trauma of Class Oppression***

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### **Abstract**

*Kanyadaan*, the most controversial play of Vijay Tendulkar, deals with psychological study of social tensions caused by casteism in India. *Kanyadaan* not only deals with the problem of marital relation in patriarchal society through Jyoti and Arun but also throws light on class differences and caste conflict in modern Indian society. It may be seen as indirect comment on the evil consequences of father's obsession with idealism and husband's obsession with caste consciousness. The playwright has focused on the problem that it is difficult to bridge a gap between two different sections and castes of the society. The play *Kanyadaan* has the background of the twentieth century history of the struggle over the practice of untouchability and the immediate phase of the Dalit movement in Maharashtra and in the nation as a whole. Inside the play, Tendulkar presents snapshots of opposition and social change. The characters' activities and decisions embody the potential for extraordinary change, accentuating the meaning of individual organization and aggregate endeavours in testing abusive cultural standards. Through *Kanyadaan*, Tendulkar plans to rouse reflection and support a reconsideration of existing power structures and cultural assumptions.

**Keywords:** Conflict, Casteism, Culture, Suffering, Trauma

### **Introduction**

Vijay Tendulkar is among one of the most prominent writers of the modern era. He began his literary career as a dramatist in mid-fifties. His plays have been translated into major Indian languages. He has highlighted the hypocrisy inherent in the double standards of society. Plays of Vijay Tendulkar shatter the composure of the reader by presenting the life and its problems realistically. Some dramatists are impugned to present only the problems and not the solution Vijay Tendulkar cannot be categorised among these because his plays make people more aware of the complexities of life. They are helpful in defining and refining thoughts about the evils



prevailing in the society. His plays are not only didactic, but they also have the ingredient of entertainment. They leave the reader in a thinking mood. Tendulkar's composing was well established in the truth of Indian culture, and he frequently drew motivation from contemporary occasions and issues. His plays mirrored the battles, clashes, and logical inconsistencies common in Indian culture, testing customary standards and uncovering the hidden social and moral affectations. One of Tendulkar's prominent composing methods was his utilization of incorrigible humour and parody. He utilized parody to taunt and condemn cultural ills, introducing them in a way that was both engaging and provocative. His play *Kanyadaan* (1983) was originally written in Marathi. The play portrays the struggle of a girl Jyoti, who is born in a Brahmin family and gets married to Arun Athavale, a Dalit. The play points out how social strata of life play a very crucial role in the life a person. Jyoti's father is a politician with a progressive view. He is not rigid about caste. He wants to break the caste barrier. Her mother Seva is a social activist. Jyoti's brother Jayaprakash is in the favour of none.

### **Major Thrust**

Vijay Tendulkar, known as Arthur Miller of Indian theatre, is a life-long resident of the city of Mumbai in India. He wrote thirty full length plays and twenty - three one act plays, several of which have become classics of modern Indian theatre. *Kanyadaan* is a serious "social problem play" by Tendulkar. Tendulkar effectively presented complexity of human situation in this drama, the emotional connections and conflicts between the downtrodden and elite segments of society. The play can be seen as "the play of ideas" about the relation of the political to the personal and of the public to the private. The incompatibility of Brahman and Dalit ceases to be an abstract principle and manifests itself as the friction between parent and child, sister and brother, husband and wife. *Kanyadaan* is set with regards to Indian culture, where organized relationships are as yet common, and ladies frequently face cultural assumptions and limitations inside conjugal connections. One of the focal subjects in Tendulkar's evaluate is the possibility of *Kanyadaan* itself, which means "offering the lady." This training is well established in man centric standards, where a lady is viewed as the property of her dad before marriage and is then given over to her significant other as his property.

*Kanyadaan* is perhaps the most tendentious of all the plays written by Tendulkar. It dwells on extremely delicate social and political issues. Vijay Tendulkar is a prolific writer. Twenty eight



long plays are to his credit. He has written several one-act plays as well as children plays. He often portrays socio-political problems in his dramas. In *Kanyadaan*, he depicts the conflict between the upper-class and Dalit. He criticizes the politicians on the base that rather than removing the evil of class-distinction, they capitalize it. He presents this evil as it is. He certainly arouses some questions in our mind but he does not bother to answer them. As the title suggest, *Kanyadaan* deals with the theme of marriage. The problem and the consequences of the marriage Vijay Tendulkar shows is self-created. Nath Devlalikar is an MLA and his wife Seva is a social worker. Jayprakash is an M. Sc. student and Jyoti is an intelligent girl. This Brahmin family belongs to the upper-class. The play is divided into two acts. In the first scene of the first act, Jyoti informs her parents her decision to marry Arun Athavle, a Dalit youth. Seva is shocked to know it but Nath is relaxed and happy inside because he wants to remove the class-system which is his dream. He consents Jyoti to get married with Arun, whom she knew for the last two months. Nath wants to experiment with this marriage, which is a sort of political act. In the second scene of the act one, Jyoti brings Arun, who is dark Dalit youth doing his B. A. Jyoti is very much interested in his poetry and his autobiography. Arun feels uncomfortable in “big houses” and gets nervous and finally leaves home. What Jayprakash and Seva most is Arun’s intention to brew liquor in order to survive, if not anything remain.

The play, *Kanyadaan*, has two acts with a total of five scenes. The first act of the play begins with a discussion in the small room of Nath Devalikar where he enquires about the bus to Asangaon. Nath is an idealist Gandhi supporter, an active social worker and an MLA. Seva, his wife, is also busy with social service and the movements which take place in upliftment of women. They have two children, a son and a daughter, Jayprakash and Jyoti respectively. Jyoti is an educated Brahmin girl who falls in love with Arun Athavale, a young Dalit poet. Jayprakash is studying in M.Sc. Jyoti has been in search of meeting with her parents to let them know about her decision of marriage but she misses them together at home. The children have to take appointment from their parents to discuss social issues and personal decisions.

In the first scene of the second act, Jyoti arrives perplexed and looking unhappy. Then Arun follows, rather drunk. He asks for Jyoti’s forgiveness as he had beaten her. Jyoti leaves with him again. At this juncture also, Nath does not want his dream to get broken before his eyes though he’s aware of the plight of his own daughter. In the second scene of the act two, Arun’s autobiography gets published in which he is dealing with the theme of oppression and



miserable condition of the poor – the lower class. But the irony is that Arun himself exploits Jyoti and lives as a parasite on her. Though Jyoti is pregnant, he makes her work at home. His ill-treatment to Jyoti is a kind of answer back from the Dalits to the upper-class. Arun asks Nath to deliver a public speech on his autobiography but he refuses to do so. But looking at the plight of his daughter, in the final scene of the second act, Nath gives a hypocrite speech by praising Arun's autobiography against his will. Nath wants to prevent Jyoti from further annoyance, but Jyoti does not tolerate this and she leaves home for forever. At the end, Nath, the idealist is turned into Nath the realist. He says at the end in rage that the entrance of such dalit has polluted his home. That is how the drama ends with Jyoti's departure never to come back at the Nath's home.

## Conclusion

*Kanyadaan* exposes the characters becoming victims of their own sham and hollow idealism, as it reveals how a father's idealism becomes a cause of misery for her own daughter. It dwells on extremely delicate social and political issues. Nath and Seva both have always been social workers who have pleaded the cause of marginalised sections of the society. This play verifies that the people nurturing reformist zeal and devoid of realistic vision not only fail to get their nurtured aim but also give way to new problems. Unfortunately, their children are victimized in the course of their experiments as happens with Jyoti in the play. Vijay Tendulkar's *Kanyadaan* fills in as a piercing evaluate of marriage and position definition in Indian culture. The play reveals insight into the severe idea of social shows, the generalization of ladies, and the propagation of position based segregation. By testing profoundly instilled customs, Tendulkar rouses the crowd to ponder the requirement for social change and take a stab at a more even handed and just society.

## Works Cited

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