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POST-COLONIAL PORTION IN VIJAY TENDULKAR'S KAMALA



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Abstract: Post colonialism is the cultural logic of mixture and multilayering of modernity. It deals with colonial and colonized powers. Literature is the 'mirror' of the society. It involves a complex pattern of countering currents of thoughts stretching from socio-cultural issues to psycho-philosophical discourses. The socio-cultural dynamics operating in the environment constitute a psyche of discontent for the imbalance between individual desires and social restrains. This paper deals with the need to invent and to establish unconventional canons of theatrical strategies. That could have encompassed the inner- consciousness of individuals resisting the forces that often subdue human spirit, Mahesh Dattani, and Vijay Tendulkar in Indian English drama drifting from the ideological canons of philosophical drama nurtured by Tagore and Aurbindo. Vijay Tendulkar was a leading Indian playwright, movie and television writer, literary essayist, political, journalist, and social commentator primarily in Marathi. He was impressed by western thoughts and ideology. His writing was an outlet for western thoughts.

Key words: Post colonialism, Gender, Colonialism, individuality, Society, discourse etc.

INTRODUCTION :

Post-colonial study identifies cultural, national, ethnic, gender, race and racism and their interactions in the development of a post-colonial society. The "Western way" of thinking about the world - actively employed in the discourse of neo-colonialism - usually reduces the de-colonized peoples, their cultures and their countries, to a homogeneous whole, such as "The Third World" (consisting of Africa, most of Asia, Latin America, and Oceania). Post-colonial studies also analyze and critique such neo-colonial discourses and their over-inclusive terminology, their philosophic and political functions, seeking to demonstrate that their homogenous concepts - such as that of "The Third World" - actually refers to a highly heterogeneous geo-cultural realities that, having emerged so due to colonialism's varied impact, require more nuanced and more culturally-appropriate terminology.

POST-COLONIAL PORTION IN VIJAY TENDULKAR'S KAMALA

Literature is a potent medium of the shifting mode of socio-cultural dynamics essentially molding the patterns of human behavior and desirable commitments of social order. It involves a complex pattern of countering currents of thoughts stretching from socio-cultural issues to psycho-philosophical discourses. Of all literature genres, drama by virtue of its live performance contains infinite possibilities to modify the consciousness of audience. The socio-cultural dynamics operating in the environment constitute a psyche of discontent for the imbalance between individual desires and social restrains. The post-modern industrial upheavals in social order rocked the existing ideologies in familial

structures, ethical values, social ideals, cultural commitments. It has subsequently provided spaces for the subjects who are the victims of patriarchal domination, caste oppression, class subjugation and political hegemony. Besides of providing the spaces for these marginalized sections of society, they made cumulative efforts to reorient the mirror images existing in society. Mahesh Dattani admits, "the kind of chemistry that can be created between audience and performance on very immediate, on a gut level, I don't think any other genre offers that and I think that is what makes it very valuable tool, as an agent of social change may be without being didactic or what so ever."

Vijay Tendulkar genius was rooted in native Marathi soil, as a super observer perceived the all pervasive dilemmas and orthodoxies existing within social structure revealed in terms of gender inequalities, power politics, oddities of personal relationship and caste mechanism. His writing has been studied from many ways as -colonial, political, post-modern and many others. Post-colonial literature has a body of literary works such as- 'Orientalism' (1978) by Edward Said, 'Consciencism' (1970) by Kwame Nkrumah, 'The Colonizer and the Colonized'(1965) by A.Memmi, 'Black Skin, White Masks' (1952) by Frantz Fanon and many others. The undercurrent of social discontent running through the various issues help to explore that terrain of human consciousness that maintains its own autonomy beyond externally imposed oppressive measures. The realization of this absurdity of human existence, transformed in the form of resistance and retaliation constitutes the cardinal core of the dramatic art of Vijay Tendulkar. He confessed:

“The writer in me raises
Passionately claiming thereafter, that it is always the
Right one.....
Passionately feel that all exploitation must end.”

Vijay Tendulkar through his epoch making plays like *Silence! The Court is in Session*, *Kamala*, *Kanayadan* and *The Vultures* took his cudgels to poke at the gender inequalities that are responsible for the suppression and abuse of human potential. However, deviating from the canons of sentimental and conventional feminism, he prepared the stage to explore human potential of women beyond the burden of domesticity and child rearing practices. The play *Kamala* is an assertion of Tendulkar's vision of dynamic humanism beyond the conventions of “cardboard characters.” He proceeds with the assumption that every human being possesses an inward spark of inner strength and its suppression leads to the volcanic eruption. Hogue Wyckoff, a transactional analyst admits:

“As women and men are socialized to develop
Promoted a predetermined stilted and repetitive way of acting
life”

The play *Kamala* is a tropical drama based on the real life incidents of character Kamala. It was inspired by a real life incident expressed in *Indian Express* by Sarin who bought a poor girl from rural flesh market and presented her at a press Conference. The plight of that poor lady, Tendulkar on the one hand expresses his concern for the deterioration of human values and secondly he affirms that in spite of social marginalization, a woman possesses the power for the reorientation of socially accepted irrational and inhuman ideologies. The idea of gender discrimination has been projected through the suffering of two women – Kamala – an illiterate slave purchased from flesh market and other is Sarita, the wife of Jaisingh a well known journalist. Vijay Tendulkar put forward two contradictory conditions manifested in the life of Kamala and Sarita, support to draw a common conclusion that woman folks are basically neither weak nor insensitive. They can accumulate their power as the mechanism of resistance and can revolutionize the entire system.

In *Kamala*, Sarita, her opulence survives in her kitchen spaces, with the garb of silence and submission. Like a subordinate, she was expected to attend and note all the telephone calls coming for her husband. Kakasaheb, Kamala's uncle did not like it. She is so obsessed with the authority of her husband that she ignores all her responsibilities for the sake of her husband. The play *Kamala* begins with the arrival of Jaisingh along with Kamala who appears with a bundle in the cover. The poverty and ignorance of Kamala was to be manipulated by Jaisingh for his success as a journalist. Kamala emerges as a 'silent' and 'muted' image without any choice and identity of her own. Jaisingh with utmost sturdily addresses her as “Id Ka Chand”. Sarita appears as a necessary foil to the character of Kamala. Sarita has equally to bear the authority of Jaisingh. If Kamala is a victim of the irrational authority of Press, Sarita has to survive with the burden of patriarchal authority

but in the case of both of them; their human identity is obscured and neglected. With sardonic smile, he appreciates Kamala's hardships, “toil and labour take getting used to luxury doesn't. The crudity is at apex when during the auction, she was placed and evaluated like cattle, “The man who wants to bid handle the women to respect them whether they are firm of flabby young or old, healthy or diseased. How they feel in the breast, in their wait in their things and.....” The implicit crudity in this observation makes Sarita petrified. She shudders at the thought of the auction of woman in the flesh market. The excitement of Jaisingh and nervousness of Sarita makes a strong dramatic situation to expose the horrors of gender discrimination. Each step taken by Jaisingh drags Sarita in the direction of self realization.

Vijay Tendulkar has described the mental violence inflicted on Sarita is more intense and poignant than social apathy. Crudity inflicted on Kamala's life becomes an unconscious manifestation of the humiliations hidden in the consciousness of Sarita. Her silence against the decisions of her husband transforms into unacknowledged fury. The meeting of Jain and Jaisingh before the Press Conference is a strong sensational dramatic situation to expose the tension of Jaisingh. To make his press conference a success, Jaisingh does not let Kamala take her bath without his permission. The psychic disorder born out of such cruelty makes a greater damage to human sensibility. It has been aptly attributed, “there is a cruelty in the heart of man. Even though man is a civilized being now, there is still the savagery of primitive man in him. “With salvage selfishness Jaisingh doesn't allow Kamala, the woman he bought in the flesh market to make the bath before the press conference where he enjoys the luxury of Bah after the tedious journey.” Jaisingh shamelessly admits, “She'll feel dirtier after her bath. Please don't do any such things concerning her without asking me first.” In contrast of chauvinism of Jaisingh it is evident that Kamala is also nervous at the idea of meeting at Public Conference. She innocently confesses, “But I don't know how to talk with people. I'm an ignorant woman.” Kamala surrenders against the conditions of Jaisingh but the idea of dirty clothes haunts her consciousness. It signifies that Kamala is endowed with the same sensibility that can be found in any woman of higher status. She hesitantly demands one saree from Sarita. In Kamala's suffering, Sarita recollects her strength and she cries out, “She's a woman, after all, and her Sari is torn.” With this sympathetic realization, Tendulkar affirms that all women share equal sensibility beyond the considerations of class and caste. At this juncture, Tendulkar creates several counter acting situations to construct the fabric of the hollowness of idealized mirror images.

In the play *Kamala*, Tendulkar in the second act, reconstructs the identity of his female protagonist to make them aware against the sexual colonialism which is depicted in double way. He projected such bold concept in the play *Kamala*. He accepts that a woman can shift her position from 'invisible margin' to visible centre. The post Press Conference discussion between Jain and Jaisingh confirms that they have no reverence for women flock either she may be Sarita or she may be Kamala. Jain without least care for Kamala's sentiments presents a very obscene question,

“How many men have you slept with?” on such cruelty, Sarita fails to control her rage, she cries out, and “weren't they ashamed to ask such questions.” During Press Conference, Kamala smiles and Jaisingh interprets her smile with an undertone of sadisms: “Please, don't misunderstand- she laughed too, just because others were laughing. She hadn't understood a thing.”

The transaction of personal feelings between Sarita and Kamala after Press Conference comes as a turning point in the play. Tendulkar develops a chemistry of common feminine sensibility to prove that woman. Kamala in spite of her poverty and illiteracy was shocked to find that Sarita had no belongingness in the family. Kamala in her innocence finds Sarita no better than a bonded labour. And Kamala's radical suggestion to Sarita, to share sexual life with Jaisingh on contractual basis is a challenge to the cramped gender relations operating in society. Kamala in spite of being a slave from flesh market better preserves her own autonomy of self.

The mental picture of Kamala becomes the strength of Sarita. It stirs her consciousness to make protest against her slave-like position in Jaisingh's house. Kakasaheb exposes Kamala's position and admits “you see, Kamala is just a pawn in his game of chess.” With the realization of her identity, Sarita withdraws herself from the mental spaces of Jaisingh.

CONCLUSION:

To conclude, in the play, there are three women characters such as – Kamala, Sarita and Kamalabai represent the three dimensions of womanhood but one common feature existing in the reactions of three makes it evident that a woman can be submissive, passive, and inactive but she must not be treated as non-living entity. Sarita's last move in to be an anchor of sinking authority of Jaisingh is not a sign of surrender but it is her affirmation of those values of life that have been the glory of idealized womanhood. Vijay Tendulkar consciously and unconsciously projected large portion of post-colonialism in the play Kamala.

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